THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE BIRTH CONTROL RACKET

WHEN the Hancock bill, which sought to legalize the distribution and sale of birth control information, was defeated by a vote of twenty to four by the Congressional Ways and Means Committee last week, the opponents of birth control, successful as they were in this instance, were given two startling lessons of the need for eternal vigilance—and well-organized vigilance, at that. The first lesson was provided by the evidence showing the political influence of Mrs. Margaret Sanger and her group. The second lesson was provided by the amazing revelations supplied by Mrs. Rita McGoldrick of the extent to which birth control propaganda has become the main support for a commercial racket for the sale of birth control appliances to the school boys and school girls of the nation. Let us take these two points in order.

As the Brooklyn *Tablet* points out, the hearing before the House Committee on the Hancock bill came as a total surprise to the opponents of the measure. According to the *Tablet*, which is exceptionally well informed on this subject, "from several quarters it had been stated that the House Committee would not give a hearing on the bill because it was almost identically the same as the Gillette bill, which was overwhelmingly defeated last year. It appears, however, that Mrs. Sanger and her group had enough political influence to command a hearing on practically a moment's notice, and not only that, but the hearing was held when the opponents of the measure were before the Senate body. Moreover, the opponents did not know of this hearing —and consequently could not learn the arguments at first hand—until it was over. The following day, however, the House Committee heard the opponents of the measure. The notice was short and there was little time for planning or organizing." And the *Tablet*, correctly, in our judgment, points out what should be learned from lesson No. 1: "These hearings demonstrate again what was set forth here last week, i.e., the champions of race suicide are well organized, influential and persistent. One can understand their program. They intend to go to Washington every year with the same measure, use trickery to get a favorable report when the opponents are off guard and then hope to jam it through. Only watchfulness and intelligent organization will defeat them."

Lesson No. 2 deals with a point so disgustingly horrible that only the necessity of having it known to the public in all its sordid ugliness, so that the public may

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know how children are being corrupted by the practical aspects of the birth control agitation, can justify a decent journal in giving it publicity. We dealt with this matter, although more or less theoretically, when we commented more than a year ago (April 1, 1931) upon the action of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, through a special committee, in giving moral approval to birth control. We alluded to the fact that this committee recognized certain dangerous consequences of the growth of birth control practices. It warned the public "against advertised nostrums which are beginning to appear in thinly disguised forms in reputable journals." How journals accepting such advertisements can justly be termed "reputable," the Federal Council moralists did not explain. The plain truth of the matter, of course, is that profiteering in contraceptives has become so rich a harvest field that it is well on the way to become not only a major industry, but "reputable" as well, simply because it is so profitable. For that is the way of the world when it discards the guidance of Christian moral principles.

The Federal Council report was mainly concerned with the use of contraceptives by married couples. But what about unmarried people? The council took the same attitude that is characteristic of birth control advocates in general; it minimized this matter. It did concede that "serious evils, such as extra-marital sex relations, may be increased by a general knowledge of contraceptives." But it tried to dispel any alarm that this remark might have occasioned by the optimistic belief, or hope, rather, that "the undesirable use of contraceptives will not be indulged in by most people." But it is quite clear now that this optimism was unjustified.

Mrs. McGoldrick, of Brooklyn, representing the one hundred thousand members of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, at the hearing on the Hancock bill, clearly pointed the chief one of the unspecified evils which the Federal Council thought "may be increased," and then proved how in fact it had increased—this evil being the deliberate corruption of high school boys and girls. We shall let Mrs. Rita McGoldrick herself speak on these two points. She said:

"The letting down of the bars of law against the dissemination of birth control information, the general distribution of contraceptives and the free importation of such articles is to let loose a flood of temptation upon a younger generation. I use the word younger with especial emphasis, for it is my keynote. Your bill, if passed, will mean that the boys and girls of this nation may obtain dangerous information that they might not otherwise meet with until they are very much older. It would mean an aroused curiosity, experimentation, promiscuity—and inevitably, disease . . . for, of course, Mr. Chairman, the proponents of this measure may not claim that contraceptives prevent the worst communicable diseases that medical science deals with —the kind of physical curse which contracted by boy or girl may be transmitted for more than one generation.

"Does this sound a little lurid, perhaps a little far-fetched? I mean it to sound gravely bitter for, as the wife of a doctor, I have heard more than the average woman of the tragedies that find their way into hospitals. . . .

"The immediate story, however, is this, and I am sorry that Dr. Howard Kelley of Johns Hopkins University, whose testimony you heard a little while ago, is not here at the moment to hear it. He spoke of the evil conditions existing in London and Hawaii, where free information on this whole subject could be obtained on the counters of any drug store. We need not go so far afield for examples! . . .

"There is, in the city of New York, at Audubon Avenue and 192nd Street, one of the greatest coeducational high schools in the United States. It is called proudly, the 'George Washington High,' and it has an enrolment of 6,000 students. That is considered a fairly large sized town in a great many communities in this country. On the corner of the city block which that big school commands, there is a prominent drug store patronized by the students. This week—today—the main show window of the store has a huge placard announcing the sale of contraceptives and how and where further information on the subject may be obtained. The window itself is attractively decorated to accommodate a complete display of contraceptive articles.

"On the counter inside are booklets for sale at ten cents apiece. Here, Mr. Chairman, is one of them, purchased at that drug store. You will see on pages 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and on pages 18, 19 and 20 that the instructions are not only definitely specific, but *diagrammed.* May I hand you this booklet for a moment? I need not point out to you, of course, that it is a flagrant violation of the federal law as well as a defiance of the law as it exists in the state of New York.

"These pamphlets are sold freely to the students of the high school. The principal of the school, Mr. Arthur Boylan, told me yesterday that he stopped into the store to find forty of his pupils around these counters. He had also several of his teachers go to the store to purchase, as witnesses, the pamphlets and articles."

This particular case is now in the hands of the New York police. What they will do about it remains to be seen. But further testimony by Mrs. McGoldrick showed that the mails are being flooded with similar pamphlets sent to boys and girls as well as to men and women. Statistics backed by the Birth Control League itself show that contraceptive articles sold in this country annually amount to more than one hundred million. What proportion are sold to boys and girls cannot be precisely known, but that the youth of the nation is being perverted in large and steadily increasing numbers is certain.

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WEEK BY WEEK

THIS issue appears when the Catholics of the world, at the invitation of their Supreme Shepherd on earth, are united in an octave of prayer for a sorely disunited and distraught humanity. We have a multitude of panaceas being offered by swarms of self-appointed prophets all over the world, which in their total effect are distinguished by confusion and the iteration with which each of their proponents claims that his is the "practical" plan. One fairly constant ululation in the midst of this, is the cry that we need leadership. In all humility, we suggest that men and women pause and reflect on the sight that is before them today. With filial devotion, with respect and with honor, between three and four hundred million men, women and children, in every country, civilized or so-called uncivilized, on the globe, are acknowledging the leadership of their spiritual head. And what has he asked them to do? He has invited them, and "indeed all men of good-will," actively to express their devotion to an ultimate justice, and ultimate mercy, in the love of God: "Let these be days of mortification and of prayer. Let the faithful abstain at least from entertainments and amusements, however lawful; let those who are in easier circumstances deduct also something voluntarily, in the spirit of Christian austerity, from the moderate measure of their usual manner of life, bestowing rather on the poor the proceeds of this retrenchment . . . and let the poor rise more generously even to the Divine sublimity of the Cross of Christ, reflecting on the fact that if work is among the greatest values of life, it was nevertheless the love of a suffering God that saved the world."

The Sacred Heart

THE LITERAL fact of the latter, as well as its more universal implication, can be appreciated best by the careful student of history. A terrible disunion and darkness of spirit confronted the entire world once before, after a reasonably noble paganism had degenerated into a cult of lust gratification, ending ultimately in all the abnormal lusts, conspicuous among which was the enjoyment of cruelty, the torture of human beings for its own sake, for the thrill-gratification of the mob. Opposed to this ultimate cult of licentiousness and degeneracy, was the strange doctrine of the Cross, and the spiritual nobility, and perfectability, and happiness of man. Brutish men scoffed at it as impractical; and for ten centuries there was real darkness on the world, a period of mourning, whether or not the multitude appreciated it, for the Victim of man's wrong-headedness. While the carnal empire disintegrated, and men and women hovered miserably in its ruins (there was no building of any kind between about the fourth and the tenth century), the saving doctrine of the Redemption of man by Christ was spreading like the core of sanity that little by little returns to a fevered, distraught and insane person incapable of coherent action. Little by little our Christian world emerged with its multifarious shrines to the memorialization of God, its hospitals, its concern for charity, for corporate unity for the service of all humanity. This core of Divine and human sanity was of course subject to attack from all the old fallacies in new form, and often it has seemed almost mortally wounded. Yet for a sign and a renewal of our hopes in our own times in the midst of the conflicts of men, we have the united and Catholic Church founded by Christ to which we have referred in the preceding paragraph. That "all men of good-will" may appreciate the fact of it, they are invited affectionately to enter a Catholic church at any hour of the day, from early in the morning until late at night, and to see the numbers of the men and women who, silently and fervently, before their God are dedicating themselves anew to struggle for the principles which He in His Divine Mercy revealed for all the world.

PAINTING "the sorry picture" of the present to which we have long since been accustomed, Mr. Edward F. McGrady addressed the Baltimore Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems from the point of view of one interested in the destinies of labor and anxious to find the culprit. This noxious creature he eventually identifies with the grab-as-you-can American banker. "Industry," he said, "has permitted control to slip out of its hands into those of the financiers." The processes through which this "permission" has been granted were then skilfully outlined by Mr. McGrady, whose address is eminently worth reading. Nevertheless we allow ourselves earnestly to doubt whether any of these games of hide-and-seek are very valuable. It is true enough that the banker sat in on corporation and association meetings, that he voiced his opinion of projects, and that he pocketed a share of the spoils. Essentially, granted the said banker's intelligence and honesty, this move may often have been valuable, offering as it did a conservative check on the handling of moneys. But of course, in most instances, the banker himself only represented the accumulated and accumulating capital wealth of the nation. Virtually all fortunes, great or small, had either directly or indirectly been entrusted to his care. These fortunes varied in size, but they were alike in being actuated by an inner desire for expansion. The trouble lies, therefore, in this desire which neither banker nor barber did anything to curb. After all, the real point has been made some time ago by Mr. Lawrence Dennis, in his book, "Is Capitalism Doomed?": "To occupy positions of influence or responsibility in the America of today, a man must have the endorsement of big business, which means that he may not have the soul of a leader. The American people demand this as much as business does. The nation is as deeply imbued with the business faith as any people ever was with a state religion. . . . The people will suffer under their business leaders but follow them they must, to the bitter

Finding the Culprit

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end, for the people have no other leaders. Nor have they any other faith." And that is pretty near the sad truth—verifiable no less from the story of organized labor than from the narrative of banking.

Women Are Better

WE HAVE periodically given statistics on crime in the United States as these emanated from official sources. The import of all of them is only too well known: crime is terribly on the increase. Last year, the Census Bureau has just announced, the number of persons who after trial were committed to prison, increased 12.1 percent over the number of the year before. Truly on reflection this is a staggering increase. Of this number, 68,091 were men and 2,875 were women. The number of male prisoners has during the past three years shown a steady rise, while the number of females committed to the federal and state prisons has steadily declined. This we believe is notable. We do not know exactly what it proves in regard to our society and the causes of crime. Comment on this phenomenon from sources competent to analyze it, we believe, should be most interesting and potentially helpful. The obvious, wide-open possibility it gives the feminists to joke at the expense of the men, of course, while it may be amusing and a statement of plain facts, will hardly assist toward improvement. In conclusion, simply to finish the picture which is given by this newest batch of figures on crime in the United States, it may be reported that 68,385 persons were discharged from prison last year, compared with 61,653 in 1930; however, of the former number, 34,745 were paroled and only 25,367 were released with their sentences completed.

Medicos and Men

MOST doctors choose their profession, not from inborn aptitude or love of suffering humanity, but as a likely way of making a living. Nevertheless they are competent and responsible, in the main, albeit pedestrian and uninspired. Much of the criticism leveled at them has a real basis but one quite beyond their control. Their professional efficiency is impaired by those patients who won't, and the much larger number of those who can't, pay the steadily mounting cost of adequate medical treatment. They suffer, too, from the public misconception of medical practice as a method producing infallible results by set rules, instead of what it really is, a personal art depending only in part on science (though that must be exact), and for the rest on many imponderables of intuition and adjustment. Thus speaks an anonymous doctor in the *Forum,* in the course of an interesting brief in the general case of Scientist vs. People. We have dealt before in these columns with the economic factor in medicine, and have examined various projects for group practice designed to meet it. We will say a word on the second handicap alleged, which seems to us to touch on an anomaly inherent in the situation. IT LIES in the fact that any scientist, *qua* scientist, must be tentative, disinterested, open to new factors and confessedly experimental; whereas, *qua* social unit, he must get the income he needs or the publicity he finds useful or desirable, from untrained people (high and low) quite unable to grasp the technical nuances of his knowledge, but determined to have their money's worth. We do not profess to know the solution of this problem, which grows more acute with the increase of publicity spreading fake scientific "facts" and arousing the public expectation of prodigies; and certainly we do not blame the scientist for it. But is he always clear of blame in the way he meets it? Does he not often try to make the best of both worlds? To come to the specific case of medicine, does he not often assume (if only tacitly) the infallibility of the magician, and then complain in the austere name of science at the public's fury if his magic fails? The *Forum's* doctor displays this double attitude all the more tellingly for being, by every other sign, an honest and conscientious man. For after proclaiming the "shocking ignorance of the limitations of medicine," he writes these extraordinary lines: "Every day and every day my hands are tied and I am reduced to impotence by things over which I have no control. . . . The doctor cannot make the patient do anything. He advises operation, say; the patient refuses. What can he do? Answer: nothing." Just why, on the good doctor's own showing, should the answer be anything else? He has found the public inconveniently credulous up to this point. He should welcome a little saving scepticism from them, even though it takes the form of their retaining legal possession of their own bodies. Perhaps it has not entirely escaped their attention, after all, that successful medicine is a very special art, which not every well-meaning M.D. can practise. Of course they are inconsistent; but everyone is inconsistent at times. Even doctors may be inconsistent.

Belief in God

FRANZ WERFEL, the well-known author, has published in *Die Literarische Welt* (Berlin) a "credo" of extraordinary interest, from which we quote the following passage: "The unbeliever finds in his inner world only the outer world: that is, a world which is, therefore, without meaning or value. As a result he turns away from his inner world, because its emptiness is more tormenting than is the emptiness of the world of things which noise and trouble activate. A whipped fugitive from his ego, he plunges into a sea of business, the result of which is that he creates false needs in social life and does endless harm. The believer likewise finds in his inner world the outer world, but this has meaning and value for him. But he finds more. He finds the experience of the super-sensual significance of all sensorily given things. In his soul he notices a point of focus, at which all the rays of the spirit and of love are collected—the point at which the inner apprehension of God takes place. Accordingly, the inner world is richer for him than the world of

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sense, and following the law of progression from the lesser to the larger he turns his gaze upon himself. He detests mere activity and loves contemplativeness. This inward gaze reveals to him also those other values and powers which move round the central sun of religious experience like planets—the poetic, creative energies of the soul. He understands at once that enthusiasm is the high tension of life, and the view of religion that the reason for the existence of angels is an eternal song of praise no longer seems ridiculous to him. Rising from meditation he is richer than before and seeks to pour out his heart to others. Thereby he enriches others, in contrast to the activistic materialist, who draws his fellow men into the mad flight of nothingness, thereby plundering and robbing them.

"THE UNBELIEVER believes in nothing *more* than death, the believer in nothing *less* than death. Just as for the second the world is the creation of spirit and love, so he is sure that as a creature he cannot be threatened in essence with eternal destruction, since not even the matter of which his body is formed is destroyed, being merely transformed by new combinations. The most important personality-forming element of his own little human spirit is the organ of spiritual continuity—the memory. The believer believes that God has made man in His likeness. (Nihilism turns this sentence around and says that man has created God in his image. But obviously this is a mere homology. Man can produce nothing that has not been placed in him. Without inner apprehension of the Divine, he would never have been able to interpret the Divine.) Accordingly we may say that there must correspond to human memory an infinitely more accurate and perfect all-memory of the Deity. The manner of this memory no one can comprehend. But one thing is certain: in whatever manner being may exist beyond time and space, no breath of living or lived life can escape from it. And so the believer believes in nothing *less* than death."

The Calvert Cruise

HOW WOULD you like to recline at your ease on the deck of a luxurious steamer plowing through the sapphire-blue waters of the Mediterranean? The reply is likely to be somewhat pointed and appropriate in the American vernacular. But some people are going, and the sum they will be asked to pay for more entertainment than can be enumerated in a paragraph sounds like the present quotations for boom-time stocks or for eggs in Indiana. The said voyage, instituted and supervised by Mr. James Boring for the especial delight of the needy yet fastidious, will be in part a Calvert cruise. That is, The Calvert Associates have made a heroic effort to round up those among them who feel the blessed urge to visit Italy, Greece, Palestine, Egypt and North Africa, and who won't mind stopping off at Cyprus, Rhodes, the Balearic Islands and places of consequence in Spain and on the Dalmatian coast. Two priests—Fathers Christopher and Jordan, also *doctores illustrissimi* of the Catholic University—will accompany the party and be prepared incidentally to point out the very spot where Newman wrote "Lead, Kindly Light." On board the President Johnson, which is the Dollar liner engaged, there will also be diverse savants and canny folk to whom one can turn for information about anything that suggests a question. The price, we repeat, is negligible for anyone who has the money—which, we deeply regret, is not the case in our case. If interested (and we hope you are, since this is our first attempt at writing advertising copy) address the inquiry to this office, together with the promise to quaff one glass in our honor.

GOETHE AND THE INQUIRING MIND

ENOUGH has been said and done in honor of the Goethe centenary to justify a few remarks which are intended for a summary of a certain kind. What interests us specifically is this: does the admittedly greatest of modern literary personalities stand definitely outside the communion of Christian thought, or is he to be regarded as one form—though heterodox, to be sure, in a number of details—in which this thought found expression? The query is of more than seeming importance. Upon how one answers it depends, to a considerable extent, one's opinion of the relative aloofness of all modern culture from Christian principle. If Goethe, who is the great valley into which the waters of rationalistic humanism pour to emerge again as the fountain streams of romanticism, is radically and thoroughly unorthodox, then there is little for a Christian spirit to do but repudiate the whole of recent "civilization" and dream either of a new transcendency or of a leap back to an older outlook.

We may begin by contrasting Goethe very roughly with Dante. For the great Italian, the universe is purely objective—given by philosophic science and revelation. He does not question the rightness of the cosmic schemata proposed by Aquinas and other thinkers of the mediaeval time; and the moral law, the defections from which are his chief concern, is for him clear, absolute and enduring. Dante is a critic of men, who appraises them just as a kind of judge of pictures estimates these. Is it a Raphael or a Botticelli? The judge reaches a conclusion, but it does not occur to him to doubt the value of Raphael and Botticelli in themselves. The "Divina Commedia" asks: is this or that personage a moral man, a Christian? Defining "moral man" or "Christian" only vaguely concerns Dante. He measures by rules which are lucid, not to be questioned.

Goethe is born the child of a society which has subjected all things to scrutiny—the concepts of natural and astronomical science, the doctrines and claims of the Church, the moral values, the aims and possibilities of thought. We need not pause to ask why the old objective datum had been subdivided into a myriad

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parts, the proper putting together of which interested and puzzled mankind. It is obvious that by the close of the eighteenth century this atomization of the world as presented to the human intellect and will had proceeded so far that there existed literally nowhere a virile consciousness of the "whole." In an age when even leading churchmen were seeking in obscure mystical cults for "illumination" which theological and philosophical doctrine no longer appeared to offer, it must have seemed only too apparent that the sole way out was to begin all over again—to reëstablish a synthesis which would take into consideration newly accumulated masses of knowledge and experience. Such a synthesis necessarily had to be made for one's self. Just as the objective universal unit had been sundered into bits, so also were men cut off from social consciousness, made "individuals" in a sense probably unknown in history after the latter days of Greece.

Now it was from this point that Goethe had inevitably to set forth. In more ways than one, history was kind in deciding that he was to be born in a Rhenish city, heir to the as yet unformed German tongue. For while German intelligence in that age was profoundly modified by French culture, it was also slowly becoming conscious of deeply rooted folk traditions which had conserved much of the so-called "instinctive mind" developed by long centuries of folk living. Between these two forces Goethe was to veer all his days, though he enlarged and deepened his contact with both, on the one hand by his love for Italy, on the other hand by his active labors as an educator of his own people and a creator of that *Bildung* which was to become so large a part of their national treasure. Thus his work acquired a marvelous inward variousness, for which he found a characteristic and representative principle of unity.

This principle, which M. Charles Du Bos has analyzed recently in a very fine paper (contributed to *Vigile*), was the steady, progressive development of the personality. All the great books on Goethe are really studies of how he carried out this program and expressed it in his works—works which for this reason have a coherence, a sequel character, rare in the history of letters. It is impossible to outline the story here. What interests us is the definition which Goethe proposed, and the elements upon which he drew for its realization. Now doubtless, viewed in the natural order, Goethe's "personality" is the most comprehensive ever formed. He restated in terms of the modern individual all the tested recipes of the ages. But what of those forces which transcend the natural order, forces in which, by the constantly repeated statement of Christian life, we exist and move?

Now there is no doubting that Goethe was a deeply religious man. Anyone who reads even casually the great poems and novels will feel that the writing is saturated, even as was Wordsworth's or Carlyle's, with a never-failing consciousness of the Divine depths out of which the human being is tossed like a splendid reflection of immortal fires. But for Goethe these depths are not clearly outlined. He avoids, both in writing and in living, any utterance which would seem to profess knowledge to which, in his mind, the human soul cannot attain. This means that for him the truths of revelation had only a hypothetical value; and there are many passages in his books which, especially when taken by themselves, indicate that Goethe was no better equipped than the great majority of people in his time to understand the true meaning of the imitation of Christ. He was almost utterly unable to comprehend the value of suffering, and for the Cross he entertained some of that curious aversion which almost by itself delineates paganism. All this may, indeed must, be granted by those who undertake serious study of the great German poet.

Yet Goethe is not all on the surface. His meaning is to be read less in isolated passages or even works than in what he himself placed foremost—the final product of his unceasing experiment in the building up of personality. Accordingly one finds abundant meaning in the following, by one of the finest among Catholic students of Goethe, Professor Karl Muth, editor of *Hochland:* "When finally, at the close of his life, he found himself faced with the great problem of deciding what fate he would mete out to his own counterpart—Faust—for whose deathless soul the powers of light and of darkness were battling as they once did for the body of the dead Moses, what did Goethe do? He chose the highest and the ultimate of which religion has taught us to conceive, namely the idea of redeeming, forgiving, rectifying, all-freeing Love. But although so much has been written regarding the concluding scene of 'Faust,' I am convinced that its significance in Goethe's life has not yet been realized, let alone made clear to the great mass of even religious-minded persons. The poet did not publish this scene during his lifetime; indeed, he kept it so secret that even his most intimate friends knew and heard nothing about it. It was to be, in the most absolute sense, his last word, with reference to which he could not be obliged to offer any explanation. And because this scene is a testament, we are in duty bound to weigh every word carefully. Once when a friend said to the ageing poet that the solution of the Faust problem would be given by the words, 'a good man is well aware of what road he must take,' Goethe answered that 'this was enlightenment, but that all of us become mystics in old age.' And in the 'Sayings,' which contain a good part of the wisdom accumulated by Goethe, we find the same thought: 'Old age finds rest in Him Who is, Who was, and Who shall forever be.' This insight Goethe transformed into a deed; and he did not shrink from paying homage to Christian mysticism in the last 267 lines of 'Faust.'" Because we agree with these words, and with the analysis which follows them, we do not hesitate to say that the final word of Goethe's quest was a Christian word, and that his remembrance is an event in which the modern Christian can share with rejoicing.

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THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR'S

By GERHARD HIRSCHFELD

In replying to the fateful question of how public buying power can be restored, Mr. Hirschfeld examines the problem of wages. Holding that the largest share of production and labor falls to that small group of industries—less than a tenth of the total number—which employ 250 or more men each, the author reviews the wage and dividend history of this group. He concludes by asserting that industrial revival alone can help the farmers and kindred groups out of the depression; that this revival is the matter to which the leading producers must give attention; and that solution of the problem is possible.—The Editors.

TIME and again, the question is asked: how can the buying power of the people be restored? It is absolutely the fundamental problem of this depression; humanly, because, if solved, it would do away with want, unemployment and naked misery; economically, because it would help production on its feet again. Pope Leo speaks of "the great and principal duty to give everyone a fair wage." But can it be done? Among the economic branches, the manufacturing industry is by far the most important, its annual output running, in normal times, to about $75,000,000,000. In its responsibility for the economic welfare of the country it overshadows the farmers, the railroads, the mines or any other branch of business, especially so if we add to the importance of manufacturing industries that of the tremendous and far-flung system of distribution.

What does this manufacturing branch look like—not today, of course, when confusion and uncertainty predominate over the regular run of business, but in the so-called "normal" stretch, that is, before the depression swooped down upon an unsuspecting audience?

In 1925, the National Industrial Conference Board says, there were altogether 187,390 manufacturing establishments of which about 96.5 percent had working forces not exceeding 250 employees (many of them had not even 25). Obviously, the small plant is overwhelmingly the prevailing type in the industrial United States. Can the average manufacturer afford to pay fair, that is, comfortable, living wages? I doubt it very much because his profits, in pre-depression days, just enabled him to carry on; he was and is hard pressed by competition; changing trends, modes and fashions, seasonal ups and downs, bad accounts, inventions and innovations, it is said, let nine out of ten persons fail who start small businesses of their own. If there is a great number of small enterprises, nevertheless, it is due to the fact that most of those that are forced out today, start all over again as soon as they have scraped together sufficient means as well as confidence. It seems beyond doubt that not less than 96.5 percent of American manufacturing establishments cannot afford to pay decent wages, for the reason that these small manufacturers hardly earn them themselves.

Is it, then, true that good wages, plentiful buying and a new industrial prosperity are out of the question, so far as the overwhelming majority of American manufacturing industries is concerned? By no means! There are two sides to the picture; let us steal a glance across the fence. What are the remaining 3.5 percent of manufacturing establishments doing? Every one of them employs more than 250 workers. And not less than 53.3 percent of the total number of the country's wage earners are employed by these 3.5 percent of manufacturing establishments. A more convincing picture of the situation is obtained, if summarized thus: 90 percent of all the factories employ not more than 30 percent of wage earners, and they turn out only about 20 percent of industrial production. In sharp contrast, 10 percent of all factories employ 70 percent of wage earners, with their share of national industrial production running to about 80 percent.

Such a constellation must be a stunning blow, indeed, to the adherents of an "industrial democracy"; because in the above figures one faces distinctly an "oligarchy": the largest share, by far, of industrial production, of employment, falls to a very small minority as far as the number of establishments is concerned. And this was 1925. This minority has since increased its share, and the number of small establishments has further lost ground.

Statistics may be boresome, but they offer one great advantage: to express in a few figures what would otherwise have to be said in many a paragraph. What do these figures mean? They prove, briefly, that the problem of production, of employment, of wages, of buying power, of renewed prosperity, lies not with the small factory-owner or factory-operator. No matter how pitiful his situation, one does not do anything toward solving his problem by arguing his case. Again, the answer to the question, which category is the more important factor in the economic life of the nation, is in all sincerity: the 3.5 percent of manufacturing establishments. It may be unfortunate, this answer, but it covers the bare facts. It is, therefore, proposed to concentrate on these 3.5 percent to find out whether the income of the people can be increased, and whether that part of the American industry which is responsible for most of the wage earners and salaried persons, is in a position to heed Pope Leo's word, regardless of whether they are Catholic or non-Catholic business men.

Of course, if these 3.5 percent of large-scale employers are to pay better wages with which people could buy more goods, thus stimulating production, they must be profitable enterprises. Nobody will or, for that matter can, pay good wages and salaries unless the profitableness of the business warrants such a policy. Studying corporation income tax returns, one finds the ratio of profits (to capital investment) as follows:

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building industries	11	percent
manufacturing	7.9	"
banks	7.8	"
transportation and utilities	7	"
merchandising	6.3	"
mining	3.7	"
unclassified	5.8	"

This profit list does not look excessive at all. But one will do well to bear in mind that these profits were declared (in the years preceding the depression) for tax purposes. A good portion of unnamed profits hide, one can be sure, beneath such items as "reserves for expansion," "bad debts," "depreciation," "dividends," "undivided profits" and the like. In short, corporation profits actually run considerably higher than would appear from the above percentages.

Reality looked different. Just how well industry fared in those years is illustrated in the comparison between the share of employers and employees, respectively. During the period from 1923 to 1928 half the farm incomes did not increase at all, and the other half only slightly. Again, manufacturing wages, and mining wages, too, declined, while those in the transportation and building branches showed an upward curve. Real average earnings (Mr. George Soule of the *New Republic* asserts) increased not more than 1 percent each year. But in the same period, industrial production increased 4 percent per annum, and profits, mind you, 9 percent per annum.

This shows where profits went; not to the wage earners and not to the farmer or the mining operator or the small manufacturer, but to that part of industry, the above-mentioned 3.5 percent, which this writer considers responsible not only for wage- and employment-trends but for a return of more normal and more prosperous times. And let no one for a moment believe that the stagnancy in wage increases was compensated for by increased employment. Quite to the contrary: while production rose, the number of wage earners declined. In 1927, for instance, the average industrial establishment employed only four-fifths of the 1923 number of wage earners, but it achieved a production about one-eighth larger.

On the other side is found a sharp contrast between wages and dividends, most of the latter going to entrepreneurs. Dr. Julius Klein, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, said in the New York *Times:*

> A line drawn to designate the growth of the profits of industry from 1924 to the present time (1930) would describe an enormous Matterhorn, the peak of which was reached in 1929. A similar line denoting wage levels would show a gradual rise, slight by comparison with the profit trend of industry.

This trend continued in 1930. In the first half of that year, wages and salaries paid out by industry declined some $815,000,000. But dividend payments rose, during the same period, about $350,000,000. Even if one considers that many of these dividends were probably paid on business transacted in 1929, it must yet be admitted that there is a wide, wide gap between the profit trend on one side and the wage trend on the other side. This tendency to give profits and dividends preferential treatment over wages and salaries, has been carried deep into the depression; it is very much in evidence even in 1932. Another interesting trend may be observed in the fact that for the whole of 1930, dividends (paid to those who submitted income tax returns) amounted to more than $4,000,000,000, of which 88 percent went to such persons as reported net incomes of $5,000 or more, which means certainly not to the average wage earner or salaried person. There were, in 1929, nearly four times as many persons reporting net incomes of under $5,000 as there were in the class above this annual net earning; yet they received only a fraction of the dividends that went to their more fortunate brethren.

These figures show beyond dispute that the profits are there. But they do not principally flow into the coffers of the masses of consumers. This is against the law of economics, for no economy can be stabilized which is made top-heavy through a peculiar system of income distribution and which, on the other side, is undermined by diverting profits from the channels of consumption. Undoubtedly, the failure of profit trends to benefit, first of all, the consuming masses, accounts more than any other single reason for the 1929 debacle and the subsequent depression. Moreover, while industry made the profits, the employees and working men (on the average) made not even a living wage.

It is conceivable that the following argument may be offered: true enough, these 3.5 percent of American factories have a larger share of production, employment and profits than all the rest combined. But do they hold on to their powerful position? Or are they losing ground? Quite to the contrary, they are increasing this share all the time. In the years before the depression, the picture of industrial concentration was as follows. In the anthracite coal industry, four-fifths of the recoverable tonnage were controlled by eight companies, largely affiliated with railroads:

In steel capacity	52	percent	were	controlled	by	2 corporations
" iron ore	60	"	"	"	"	1 "
" copper	50	"	"	"	"	4 "
" automobiles	75	"	"	"	"	2 "
" food industries	50	"	"	"	"	2 "
" bread	25	"	"	"	"	4 "
" cigarettes	70	"	"	"	"	3 "
" banking	99	"	"	"	"	1 percent of all banks.

In public utilities, only 22 mergers were reported in 1919, but over 1,000 were recorded in 1926.

This trend of industrial centralization and concentration, which received its real impetus from the war but was carried on and over with real zeal into the 1923-1929 period, has become so marked and so powerful that by the time of the 1929 bacchanal there were approximately 200 corporations that controlled nearly half of the business wealth of the country; and these 200 corporations were controlled by 2,000 directors.

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Or a glance at the J. P. Morgan dependents and allies (including the First National, the Bankers Trust, the Guaranty Trust, the Chase National and the National City Bank), will trace their interests in the United States Steel, General Electric, International Harvester, International Merchant Marine, General Motors, E. I. du Pont de Nemours, American Telegraph and Telephone, several Standard Oil Companies, New York Central and other railroads, the International Telegraph and Telephone, Radio Corporation of America, and in important food industries. In 1929 Morgan and his 17 partners held 99 directorships in 72 corporations. In his book on "The House of Morgan," Lewis Corey estimates that the Morgan group is now represented in corporations with total net assets of about $74,000,000,000, that is, more than one-fourth of all corporate assets in the United States.

The responsible part of American industry (responsible for the welfare of the country) is ever expanding in power and influence, and it is doing so with the help of Morgan, of Wall Street and of other financial institutions spread throughout the country. It is known that most factory owners are owners in theory only. In reality, outstanding obligations, bankers loans and the credit cycle bring about their degradation from ownership to managership, though in many cases they are not even given a free hand in the operating part of the enterprise. Professor Gardiner C. Means brought out the fact that not more than 6 percent of the corporate wealth is controlled by owners, i.e., persons owning at least 50 percent of the outstanding stock.

What is meant, then, if one says that industry cannot afford to pay living wages such as the encyclical demands? If one refers to that part of industry which counts in prosperity and more so in depression, and if one believes that it cannot afford to pay better wages and salaries because these large-scale enterprises hardly get along anyway, he is on the wrong track, in view of the splendid success of the 3.5 percent of industrial establishments. If, again, one means that the prosperity of the small manufacturer is the key to our problem, he is right in the number of small establishments but does not consider the figures that count, namely, production, profits and employment.

The prevailing situation is serious; nobody doubts it. In 1929 the national income was $85,000,000,000; in 1930 it dropped off to $71,000,000,000; in 1931, to $52,000,000,000; and estimates set the figure for 1932 at about $45,000,000,000, a decline to 53 percent within four years. This drop hits, in dollars and cents, the rich man more than the middle and working classes; but the latter feel it more. Unemployment has reached an alarming extent. Of some 49,000,000 persons "gainfully employed" in 1929, there are today at least 8,000,000 entirely unemployed and probably 2,000,000 temporarily out of work, a total percentage of over 20. It must be considered, however, that only half of those "gainfully employed" were engaged in commerce and industry, or about 25,000,000 persons. In other words, figuring that there are 10,000,000 unemployed, one obtains the extremely high percentage of 40 of all industrial and commercial workers. Even in European countries which suffer from chronic unemployment, such as Germany and Great Britain, the corresponding figures are 30 and 22 percent.

The shrinkage in income, unemployment and other unfortunate characteristics accompanying the depression, have given rise to great emotional outbursts, practically all of them defending the small man, the retail trader, the obscure miner, the unimportant manufacturer. This trend, while humanly very much justified, is misguided if one comes to speak of constructive efforts. It dims the real issues. The miner in Kentucky or the much-mortgaged farmer or the despairing shopkeeper is not helped by argument as to the ills of his particular branch. He is dependent upon much stronger forces: industrial revival. And this revival, in turn, has to wait for the people's income, wages and salaries. It is for this reason that the question becomes so enormously important: can that part of industry which accounts for the greater part of the people's income, afford to increase this income?

Yes, it can! It is in a position to stabilize industrial production by stabilizing purchasing power if it (1) limits profits by limiting the influence as well as the share of the banking interests behind the industrial scenes, (2) recognizes the primary importance of consumption and uses some of the profits to guarantee employment, maintaining (at the least) the present wage level, (3) cuts competition from the present cut-throat scheme down to reasonable limits, thereby stabilizing prices and assuring profitableness. While this sounds like the bitter pill of economic treatment, in reality it means humanizing business, restricting the rather free play of pure and simple greed. When our responsible industrialists will swing around to this conception of leadership, we shall be knocking at the door of prosperity. And we shall be so much nearer the fulfilment of the encyclical. Conceding that there are things "that are Caesar's," let us also concede the "great and principal duty to give everyone a fair wage."

Communion

The long remembered years of love and beauty—
Ah, Lord, how precious these have been!
Embrace that compassed life. Alone I knew
Their dim and lovely tears. A woman of fair eyes
Gave first their gift, unprofaned with desire.

And quiet things gave, too: a tree at night,
A brook's caress, the cool and cadenced joy
Of song. But still I could not hold
Fulfilment's rapture. The far and mocking cry
Scarce heard, was made not for the ears of man.

But there was one again who watched
The muted silver logic of the stars
And said of beauty this:
A holy man once saw the Hand of God.

THOMAS WALSH.

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PAGAN AND CATHOLIC MEXICO

By FRANK C. HANIGHEN

I READ a book on Mexico recently. Well, as a matter of fact I have read many books on Mexico, and from them I derive the opinion that something is wrong with Catholicism in Mexico. The title of Anita Brenner's work was itself an accusation, "Idols behind Altars." Carleton Beals referred constantly to the Mexican-Spanish-Aztec Catholic Church in a most polemical way. Mr. Stuart Chase, an economist, so he calls himself, sums up like a historian, like a Haskins, an Acton, or a Fay: "For four centuries the Church has been trying to make good Christians of its Mexican congregations, and they remain stubbornly more than half pagan." And continuing his thesis that the body of the Catholic Church in Mexico is largely pagan in belief and ritual, adds: "A saint or a god, what is the difference?"

The evidence these writers martial is impressive I admit, and one is strongly inclined to agree that to the average peon there probably is no difference between a saint and a god. Indeed the American Catholic —is there a more self-satisfied kind of Catholic?—is too prone to dismiss his Mexican co-religionist as a greaser and not a Catholic at all, and accept in thus wise the accusations of these writers. I, who have been brought up to believe that the Pope by some mysterious error narrowly missed being a Celt and that Rome had unfortunately been chosen by Saint Peter instead of Dublin, have every reason to lapse into this view.

But while reading Chase's book or Gruening's "Mexico and Its Heritage," another favorite with Americans who go warmly "Mexican," I felt all my accumulated reading, all my knowledge on the Church, rising to object. I had never been to Italy, never attended Mass in Toledo or Seville, but the books of travel and description which I had read about these places had similar evidence of the survival of pagan practices which had never moved their agnostic authors, like Havelock Ellis, Arthur Symons or Somerset Maugham, to accusations of paganism against the whole Church. Did Mr. Chase, who writes best sellers, read that best seller of yesterday, "The Story of San Michele"? Dear old sceptical Dr. Munthe noted how the Italian peasants so warmly espoused their favorite saints—Saint Anthony, Saint James or what not—that they even preferred them to Christ Himself. As for Spain, too often have I seen representations of its horrible bleeding Christs and *Pietas* to be swayed by the argument that their Mexican counterparts and obvious derivatives came from the cult of Quetzalcoatl.

But here comes M. Pierard, a Belgian writer, who has evidently had an overdose of Gruening, just as Gruening had an overdose of the Mexican writer, Manuel Gamio. He speaks of Cholula, that beautiful city not many miles from Mexico City, teeming with shrines and churches. He notes with the triumph of a discoverer that the Church of the Virgin de los Remedios has been built on the top of a former Aztec pyramid. But have not many Christian basilicas replaced, site for site, pagan temples in Sicily? I pass on to his description of what he saw in a church at Puebla close by, and which capped his growing suspicion that the Catholic cult in Mexico was naught but a survival of the Aztec rite.

> We found in the church at Puebla two hundred Indians on their knees, following with fervor the course of the Mass, which was accompanied by soft and captivating music. At the moment of the Elevation, ten men clad in white cloth, heads covered with large straw hats, executed in honor of the Virgin and to the sound of a strange music, a rapid dance which seemed to pertain more to Negroes than Mexicans. A drum accompanied them just as in Central Africa.

Poor M. Pierard! He left Antwerp to voyage in Mexico, but apparently he need not have come so far for such a sight. For in Seville he could have found a similar ceremony which has world-wide fame. Arthur Symons has immortalized it for the Anglo-Saxon world —this little dance which sixteen boys, in blue and white sixteenth-century costume and plumed hats, execute before the magnificent altar of the cathedral and in the presence of the cardinal archbishop on December 8. Symons notes that the music was a sort of minuet and the steps they executed were quite similar to that dance. Instead of the drum, which for the poor Indians of Puebla represented music, the Sevillians had violins and wood-winds. For externals, that was all the difference.

But Pierard is even mixed in his externals. He says that "the Catholicism of the people of Mexico has nothing in common with that of the Flemish and Walloon peoples." Has he forgotten the history of his own country and omitted to study its own shrines? In the churches in Antwerp, in Bruges and in Brussels he will find the same horrible sanguinary Christs which shock him so much in Puebla. That the Duke of Alba came to the Low Countries and stayed a long time has apparently escaped his memory. And of course he could not be expected to note that the long and wide albs, the narrow chasubles without crosses on their backs, the use of a little spoon to put water in the chalice after the Offertory, are remnants of this Spanish occupation. But the processions which are such a beautiful feature of his own country, with their richly caparisoned Christs and Virgins carried amid much pomp by the faithful, should have reminded him of similar ceremonies on the Iberian Peninsula. These matters should have stimulated him not to absurd generalizations but to a fascinating study of the mixed quality of Catholic liturgy, and its international blendings.

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However, let us leave M. Pierard. I myself have been to New Mexico and, after a quick trip on a Harvey Detour sightseeing bus from Santa Fe to the pueblo of Santa Clara, watched the Indians stamp out a war dance before the statue of the Virgin. It never occurred to me to call their religion a Pueblo-Catholic-Fred Harvey cult, nor did it occur to Willa Cather, Mary Austin or Witter Bynner, who have so profoundly studied these ceremonies. It seemed the natural racial expression of these Catholics' faith.

Likewise, when I went to Old Mexico I was not shocked when I saw the agonizing Christs with brown-skinned, pajama-clad peons kneeling before them. It was their own spontaneous natural way of worshiping just as American Catholics elect to worship before altars turned out by slick new monument fabricators and adorned by images produced wholesale by high-power statuary factories. The look in the Indians' eyes as they gazed at the *tilma* of Juan Diego at the shrine of Guadalupe was no different from that of a stenographer in a Mina Taylor dress before the high altar of St. Patrick's. To the discerning it was the same faith, however different the externals might be.

But M. Pierard's torts are less noteworthy because less noted than those of Ernest Gruening. The latter's monumental "Mexico and Its Heritage" is one of the most popular of the books which step down to the lay reader the facts and interpretations of Mexican history and anthropology. Because of its bulk and profuse footnotes and documentation it has gained a reputation among usually cautious reviewers and students in this country as the final and most authoritative word on all Mexican questions. On my train to Mexico City last year four Protestant missionaries were avidly devouring its contents, and well they might. For not even the Baptist proselytizers themselves could write a more unfair and scathing indictment of the Catholic Church.

On current conditions and recent political events, "Mexico and Its Heritage" is a most meritorious volume. It gathers in a most graphic and authentic way the facts about labor, health, agrarianism, Pretorianism and political feuds within the past few years, and the future historian will doubtless draw often on this storehouse of facts and opinions. But as Dr. H. I. Priestley, professor of Mexican history and curator of the Bancroft Library at the University of California said, "Gruening gives scant acknowledgment to the Church for its contributions to American civilization." Dr. Priestley, who probably knows more about Mexican history than any other American, dismisses Gruening's chapters on the Church as without value. He points out that Gruening made the elementary mistake of not discriminating between the conditions of the religion during the Spanish conquest and those after 1580 during the viceregal rule. He also adds, which may seem dry and uninteresting to the ordinary reader, that virtually all Gruening's material comes from secondary sources.

Indeed it is from a rather partial reading of secondary accounts that he has presented a picture of Mexican religion as a largely pagan, Aztec and adulterated Catholic form of worship. As usual he bases his generalizations on facts reported by Father Sahugan, who has been called the "Father of Anthropology in America"—facts such as the existence of pagan temples on sites afterwards chosen by the Christians for their places of worship, etc. In reply to these arguments, it is best to quote G. K. Chesterton:

> Those who criticize the origins of Christianity frequently maintain that the religious festivals, processions and dances are of pagan origin. But with equal reason they could say that our stones are also of pagan origin. No one has ever denied that humanity was human before being Christian, and no church has fabricated the stones which allow men to dance or run on them whether they be now used in a *romeria* or in a ballet.

Most of these critics, such as Gruening and Beals, have read the works of Manuel Gamio, whose anthropological labors in the Valley of Teotihuacan have given him much material which has led him to conclude that the Catholicism of that valley was largely of a pagan nature. However, no one has observed that one of Gamio's assistants in this work has written a work largely opposed to his master's report, in which he finds no notable pagan fantasy in the ritual, no unorthodox syncretism, apart from a few cases in which the Indians found it hard to believe in the inferno.

This view, now that the flush of neo-Indianism and scientific rationalism has somewhat subsided in Mexico, is growing more general among scholars. The review *Contemporaneos,* the only intellectual magazine published in Mexico, has given voice to these changing trends in various recent numbers. Robert Ricard, one of its writers, has criticized Braden's book, "Religious Aspects of Conquest of Mexico," together with Gruening and Gamio in a long essay. He points out that there is a difference between crude superstition which comes from a pre-Cortezian time and from that which has grown up since the conquest. The scholars who have studied these problems have approached these matters with too much scientific knowledge and too little theology. They see only the rite, the external gesture, without analyzing the intention which motivates these rituals. That an Indian should worship the Virgin with the practices similar to those with which his ancestors worshiped Tonantzin, matters little if his intention is to honor the Virgin and not Tonantzin.

M. Ricard sneers at the new pro-Indian snobism of American writers, this "folklore observed from pullmans and tea-rooms," as he terms it. He protests against the complete ignorance of Catholicism in recent publications. He says that in many cases they classify as superstitious devotions quite properly authorized and orthodox, and he complains that they overlook the preponderant rôle which Catholicism plays in Mexican life. Sr. Ricard is not the only one in this review to protest against the improper emphasis given Indian culture. Samuel Ramos, author of "Hipotesis," a new synthesis of Mexican culture, stresses the superior value of Euro-

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pean and particularly Hispanic culture in the amalgam of Mexican civilization.

> Our "Europeanism" is not a frivolity, nor a servile mimicry; it is a recognition of the effective values of the humane life and a desire to make part of the world which contained them.

Apparently the pendulum is swinging backward from the extremes of Beals, Gruening, Chase and associates. But whatever the shifting currents of interpretation are, some stable work on the importance of the Church in Mexican history should be written and should be translated. Padre Cuevas's scholarly volumes, "Historia de la Iglesia," form a bulwark for the clerical point of view, but their very specialization and their emphasis on the institutional aspects of the Church prevent them from having a wider appeal. Some Catholic not too national in his viewpoint, or some non-Catholic who is familiar with the nature and history of the Church, might execute a task which cries loudly to be done.

AMERICAN POETRY AND TRADITION

By J. V. CUNNINGHAM

EVEN poets who rhyme "flower," "bower," and "hour" have at one time or another, by one critic or another, been called modernistic. That the Catholic reader should neglect the work of poets who are among the finest now writing, simply because they wear this label with its old-time heretical connotations, would be a pity. For the poetry of Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, W. C. Williams, Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore and Mina Loy, among the poets now over forty years of age, represents a return to fundamentally Catholic principles of literature. Among the writers thirty to forty years old, Hart Crane (at times), Yvor Winters and Allen Tate continue the tradition.

Journalists have spoken much of the "outlandishness" of these poets, and many a conscientious reader has been baffled by their work, only because he did not know what to look for in it. The matter is important to even the lay reader, for poets make the abstract ideas of a period familiar and intelligible, and thus a harmless poem may have unpredictable political and economic consequences, for men's actions are guided by their ideas. Plato, recognizing this, said that

> styles of music are never disturbed without affecting the most important political institutions . . . [until they end] in overturning everything both public and private.

How contemporary poetry differs from that of thirty years ago can be illustrated by a comparison between a poem of Mina Loy's, who is one of the least known of contemporary poets, and one of the finest, and Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven," published in 1893. Thompson writes:

> Across the margent of the world I fled,
> And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,
> Smiting for shelter on their clanged bars;
> Fretted to dulcet jars
> And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.

The late T. E. Hulme, who was in some ways a prophet of Mr. Pound's generation of poets, wrote:

> You might say if you wished that the whole of the romantic attitude seems to crystallize in verse round metaphors of flight.

When Mina Loy, in "Lunar Baedecker," published 1923, writes, the moon has become immobile, and she says:

> Pocked with personification
> the fossil virgin of the skies
> waxes and wanes . . .

In the two quotations the difference in diction is one of definiteness. With Thompson, the unusual word, such as "margent" or "dulcet," expands the meaning and makes it more vague. The word connotes more than it actually means.

Contemporary criticism takes morality in art to mean that the words of a poem should, in their stated meaning, be adequate to the emotions which they arouse in the reader. By this standard the "Hound of Heaven" becomes decidedly immoral; and although this statement may shock the reader out of his arm-chair, there is a great deal of truth in the statement. For, when the emotion aroused is greater than the thought-content of a work of art, this extra emotion overflows into action. But art is a contemplative experience, so that art which leads to action is improper and contrary to its own nature.

In the second quotation above the unusual word, such as "pocked," has a limiting and specifying effect on the meaning. The emotion is contained wholly within the object, and the effect is contemplation proper. The philosopher Bergson, who formulated many principles of the late romantics, has said:

> The word which is sharply outlined, the brutal word, which is the receptacle of all that is common and consequently impersonal in human experience, crushes or at all events covers over the more delicate and fugitive impressions of our individual conscience.

This is very true, but the contemporary poet does not sympathize with Bergson's complaint. He finds the poet's private experience, his individual impressions, to be without meaning. The "stable," the "common," the "impersonal," are a poet's material, and the hard, definite, limiting word is his instrument.

One might say, in general, of contemporary poetry, that its method is intensive, limiting and impersonal.

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And in contrast to the years immediately preceding 1910, with the exception of T. Sturge Moore and Robert Bridges, both great poets, contemporary verse is more often informed by a consideration of moral problems, and is, in short, classical in tendency. If it be objected that these are specific qualities of all good poetry, it is the contention here that the contemporary poet is more conscious in direction than any literary group has been for over a hundred years. Strangely, the ordinary lay reader has given the poet the privilege of speaking about "janes" and "bigboys," of airplanes and backhouses; yet he half objects to the poet's being "on the side of the intelligence," for he feels that poetry should be almost exclusively an emotional subject.

Poetic propaganda during the past fifteen years has, unfortunately, been devoted to establishing the reputations of poets of the third order, such as Edgar Lee Masters, Carl Sandburg, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Elinor Wylie, Robinson Jeffers, and E. E. Cummings; and thus the real direction of contemporary work has been obscured for the ordinary reader.

Now, the difference between the present day and the time of Francis Thompson has been well stated by T. S. Eliot, who writes of the Baron von Hügel, one of the greatest figures of that period, that he

> belongs to a past epoch, a period of intellectual indistinctness, in which he moved among a host of half-Christians and quarter-Christians. The present age seems to me much more an age of black and white, without shadows. We demand of religion (and of poetry, also) some kind of intellectual satisfaction—both private and social—or we do not want it at all.

This change of sensibility which demanded of poetry an intellectual, rather than emotional, satisfaction, represents not merely a change of attitude but rather a reversal of direction. Because it was a reversal, one sympathizes with the common opinion, well-stated by an editorial in THE COMMONWEAL, April 10, 1929, that the modern experimentalist "set about his work by first throwing overboard the bulk of what acknowledged masters in the field can teach him." What confuses many observers is the action of important modern artists in going further afield historically; and most of them skipped completely the generation immediately preceding themselves (the early 1900's).

Ezra Pound, for example, has assimilated into the English tradition the poetry of Arnaut Daniel, and other troubadours, and the very great poetry of Dante's friend and forerunner, Guido Cavalcanti. His translations of Li Po, the Chinese classic, in "Cathay" (1915), and of the Anglo-Saxon song, "The Seafarer," in 1922, and again, his free reworking of Propertius in "Homage to Sextus Propertius," which is one of the finest of modern poems, all these have reintroduced into English tradition elements that have long been lacking. To speak of this poet, who has followed the acknowledged masters almost too closely, as throwing overboard what they can teach him, is simply unfair. Mr. Pound's latest work, "Cantos," which is a long poem, although too curious a work to be great poetry, is nevertheless a remarkable performance with many beauties. One can hardly describe the poem except to say that it is an extended conversation, about 140 pages thus far, about classical literature and mythology, brigandage in Renaissance Italy, interspersed with a number of good modern jokes, quite farcical, and any other subject that occurs to Mr. Pound.

The tradition of T. S. Eliot is substantially that of Pound, except that it is more specifically Christian (Dante and Donne), and more specifically English (Launcelot Andrewes, Jonson, Webster). As Jacques Maritain has said:

> Art is fundamentally dependent upon everything which the race and the state, spiritual tradition and history, transmit to the body of man and his mind. By its subject and its roots, it belongs to a time and a country.

Accepting this distinction, one could say that both Eliot and Pound are cosmopolitan, in that their poetry belongs more to a time, than to a country.

Consequently, an exact definition and ironic analysis of that spiritual sterility and disillusionment which affected modern society during war days, is found in Mr. Eliot's first book, "Prufrock and Other Observations" (1917). In "Poems," published in 1920, Mr. Eliot's analysis has probed deeper, and he defines the plight of modern man as simply "loss of faith," in the theological sense. The idea is condensed in those most terrible lines of modern poetry, lines addressed to "Christ the Tiger":

> I would meet you upon this honestly.
> I that was near your heart was removed therefrom
> To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.
> I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
> When what is kept must be adulterated?
> I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch:
> How should I use them for your closer contact?

In "Hugh Selwyn Mauberly," published the same year, Mr. Pound has presented the social aspects of the same attitude, in what is probably his finest poem.

Mr. Eliot's "The Waste Land," which appeared in 1922 was an analysis of modern society, using the symbols of a mythological framework. The scene of the poem is the waste land of the Grail legends which is ruled by a wounded Fisher King, the symbol of the Absolute. Not until the King is restored to health will the sterility of the land, which signifies the sterility of contemporary society, be relieved and crops produced. This use of mythology and ritual has been the chief structural device of the cosmopolitan literary group. Mr. Yeats uses the device, Mr. Joyce in "Ulysses" and "Work in Progress," and Mr. Wyndham Lewis in the "Childermass." Where Lord Tennyson and E. A. Robinson made, each in his way, the Arthurian legends more realistic, "The Waste Land" employs them for their mythological value. Mr. Pound's myth-

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ological method is eclectic, following Ovid, who is Pound's poetic master.

While these writers appeared from time to time in such magazines as *Blast,* the *Egoist,* the *Little Review, Arts and Letters*, one finds William Carlos Williams, Mina Loy, Marianne Moore and Wallace Stevens, who might be said to belong more to a country than to a time, appearing in a small magazine, *Others*. Where the tradition of Pound and Eliot was European and literary, that of the *Others* group was American and local. As Williams wrote, "The classic is the local fully realized, words marked by a place."

Dr. Williams's first books, including "Al Que Quiere" (1917), owe much to the literary tradition explored by Ezra Pound. "Sour Grapes," published in 1922 and his best book, takes only the essence of that tradition, and endows it, by words having "a contour and complexion imposed on them by the weather, by the shapes of men's lives in places," a local habitation and a name. The name is New Jersey. He is probably the most erratic of living writers, and the most human. If the first quality estranges the casual reader, yet his humanity draws the student, who values Williams's successful lyrics among the few great things in American letters.

Dr. Williams writes in what is called free verse, but with him it is a definite controlled meter, having its own strict laws and music. If the curious reader, who had thought all free verse a variation of the Whitmanian "yowl," will read Robert Bridges's "Noel: Christmas Eve, 1913," and the speeches of Rani, Tind, Harvord and Hervord in the play "Tyrfing," by T. Sturge Moore, and "The Widow's Lament in Springtime," by Williams, he will see this same principle of meter being worked out by three very diverse craftsmen. The principles, which involve writing by word-stress rather than by number of syllables, are well explained in Dr. Bridges's excellent book on "Milton's Prosody." And yet the mistaken impression is common that all free verse is uncontrolled expression.

The accomplishment of Marianne Moore, too, in her best poems, such as "Black Earth" and "The Grave," has been the playing a precise, conversational phrase rhythm against an arbitrary line length. And the pleasure of her poetry comes from a recognition of this sophistication of rhythm, which has often been mistaken for lack of rhythm, and a concurring wit, which results from the satirical use of American stereotypes, "liability rather than an asset," and of the vocabulary of the average university graduate with its preponderance of four- and five-syllable words.

When successful, Mina Loy is probably a greater poet than Miss Moore, but her peculiar qualities will, I fear, always remain unpopular. But if you, reader, should come across a small pamphlet published in Dijon, France, in 1923, called "Lunar Baedecker," place it in your pocket; for there is a dense, malleable quality about this poetry which is unique and moving.

The fourth poet of this group, who might be said to belong more to a country than to a time, is Wallace Stevens, whose only book, "Harmonium," was reissued last year by Knopf. Stevens has a number of mannerisms which may annoy the intelligent reader, but his blank verse is almost like Jonson in quality, and he has done many beautiful things with a kind of free verse. "Sunday Morning" and "Le Monocle de Mon Oncle" are two of the finest poems, and they may be found in many anthologies. In another poem he writes:

> The time of year has grown indifferent.
> Mildew of summer and the deepening snow
> Are both alike in the routine I know.
> I am too dumbly in my being pent.

The quotation shows Stevens's quiet self-control, and it is the lesson of order and control in face of modern life and its distractions that one may learn from these poets. To prove that the work of these poets illustrates the fundamental Catholic literary principles may not be possible in a short article, but anyone who reads attentively "Art and Scholasticism" by Jacques Maritain, or better still because more plainly written, "Art Nonsense" and other essays by Eric Gill, cannot but be struck by the similarity of aim.

And indeed, T. S. Eliot has formally become Anglo-Catholic. And though there may be some disagreement as to what Catholic literature may be, one cannot but rejoice that this generation who were spoken of in the press as "modernists" and "literary bolsheviks" should prove on examination to be the conservative upholders of tradition, who are honoring tradition by keeping it alive. Of the poets of the succeeding generation, Mr. Allen Tate is probably a greater poet than his predecessors, and his theme is:

> O God of our flesh, return to us Your wrath,
> Let us be evil could we enter in
> Your grace, and falter on the stony path.

Mr. Tate's poetry, and Mr. Eliot's "Ash Wednesday," published in 1930, is highly distinguished devotional poetry. Is it too much to hope that in ten years, through the grace of the Catholic readers of poetry, one shall no longer have to say with Yvor Winters, in his new book, "The Journey and Other Poems":

> Now every village blacksmith has his day,
> Displays his hairy breast and comes away
> Grinning through laurels; every clever fop
> Enjoys his fortnight at the very top.
> And meanwhile Hardy, that heroic oak,
> Is still found dull, Williams a standing joke,
> And Bridges simple; Sturge Moore goes unread;
> Miss Crapsey and Miss Moore alike are dead.
> On any bargain counter you can buy
> Old Stevens for a quarter: let him lie.
> Malice, suspicion, calculating hate
> Are meted justly out to Allen Tate.
> Each metaphysic foetus judges best.
> Great poets all! God give them all good rest!

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THE MONTANA TRIANGLE

By EDWIN V. O'HARA

THERE is in the northern part of the state of Montana, lying chiefly in the western section of the diocese of Great Falls, a large semi-arid area commonly known as the "triangle." It receives this appellation from the fact that it is bounded on its three sides by the Great Northern Railway lines connecting Havre, Shelby and Great Falls. The section of the triangle lying in the diocese of Great Falls comprises the parish of Hingham, with an area of 6,400 square miles, approximately eighty miles square. I had often heard of the triangle before coming to Great Falls as bishop, and on every occasion that I had heard it mentioned, it was held up to ridicule as about the most hopeless spot on the American continent. It is ten years since a well-known writer selected the triangle as the villain of his piece entitled, "The Pain in the Northwest." It was in that article, I think, that the American people learned how Jim Hill had settled the triangle with deep-sea fishermen and coral divers (from a New York City office), because no one with a greater acquaintance with farming could be tricked into settling on such hopeless land. With these impressions in my mind when I came to Montana, a little over a year ago, it was natural that I should have been willing to postpone my visit to the parish at Hingham until more pressing matters were attended to. Hingham could wait.

It was not, consequently, until March 17, 1931, four months after my advent in the diocese, that I first saw Hingham. On St. Patrick's Day we were to dedicate the new hospital in Havre, and I sent word to Father Alvin Martins, O. Praem., pastor of Hingham, that I would pay him a brief visit in the afternoon of that day. To my surprise, eight or ten men drove forty miles across the prairies over difficult roads to escort me back to Hingham. On our arrival at the rectory, we found over fifty men assembled and sat down with them in the parish hall, in the basement of the rectory, to talk over their problems.

The chairman of the meeting, for presently I found that I was a guest of the Men's Club of the parish, informed me that this group of more than fifty farmers, living in a radius of forty miles from Hingham, met regularly at the rectory every Monday night, except during the busiest seasons on the farm, to consider all things of interest to their parish and community, and he expressed great gratification at the visit of the bishop, "because," said he, "we have many things to talk to you about."

Anticipating the usual grist of depression stories which would serve as a reason why nothing could be done in the parish, and with my memory of the story of the semi-arid triangle and its type of farmers, I felt that the sooner we began with the recital, the sooner we would be through with the grief.

"Yes," said the chairman, "we have many things to talk to you about—many things. In the first place, we would like to ask you what are the prospects of getting a Catholic daily paper published in the diocese of Great Falls?"

When I was able to get my breath, I replied that we would have a Catholic weekly paper within the year but that I greatly feared that a Catholic daily, however desirable, would be quite beyond us for some time. However, the club was quite happy to learn of the prospects of a Catholic weekly, and after a general discussion for fifteen minutes on the advantages of Catholic papers in the home, the chairman again arose and observed:

"We have many other things we wish to talk to you about. In our weekly meetings of this club we have been reading the encyclicals of our present Holy Father on marriage and education and of Leo XIII on the condition of labor. And we have many points in these encyclicals that we wish to talk over with you."

Whereupon, for an hour, the club members raised questions for discussion from the papal encyclicals. And it was obvious that the discussion, a very intelligent one, might run on indefinitely. So in a moment in the lull of conversation, I turned to the chairman and said, "But what about farming up here? How are you getting along in these difficult times?"

"Oh!" said the chairman, "We're not greatly worried about farming, we are old-timers here and know how to farm. And even this year, with the drought, we'll get a crop. Just now we are taking a collection of wheat among our members which we will have milled and will donate to the Sisters' new hospital in Havre. [They gave the hospital two tons of flour.] We are not worried so much about farming, but we have large families of children and are concerned about their spiritual and moral training."

"That," I replied, "is my own chief concern." And I spoke to them about the possibility of religious vacation schools where we would gather their children for a month of intensive religious training during the summer. They were impressed with its possibilities, with results that I shall now relate.

Father Martins has about three hundred families scattered about his territory, which is eighty miles square. These he ministers to in six separate missions. Some of the churches are out on the open prairie, others in little villages, of which Hingham, until recently without either water system or electric lighting, is the largest. As a result of our talk about vacation schools, Sisters, seminarians and lay teachers were engaged and a school was opened in each of the six missions, with a total registration of 380 children. The daily average attendance was very high. In one mission the children

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came from their homes twenty-five miles every day and did not miss morning Mass once in a month. This fall practically the whole parish has been resolved into a series of study clubs on the Mass. Meanwhile, the Men's Club has organized a credit union, which is caring for the credit problems of the parish at a time when no banks would loan the farmers money enough either to buy seed or to buy gasoline for the tractors. I must not fail to mention that farming in this area is very highly mechanized, and each of our farmers operates from 300 to 1,000 acres of land, the average being over 700 acres.

One final incident will complete the picture. In our meeting on St. Patrick's Day, I said to the men, "We have a National Catholic Rural Life Conference which discusses all of your problems and the next meeting will be held in Wichita, Kansas, in October." To which the club replied, "We must be represented there." And when October came, two men and two women and their pastor from the parish of Hingham, in that year of depression and drought, drove by auto 1,554 miles to Wichita, Kansas, and took a prominent part in the discussions of that national meeting. Before returning they visited eleven states to study the farmer's problems. The pastor, you will ask, what of him? That is yet another story, a considerable part of which you have doubtless read between the lines of the present narrative.

HERE AND THERE IN MODERN THOUGHT

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

I BEGIN with a personal declaration made often but never with more faith than now: "modern thought" is not the morass of errors and vanities which it is often held to be, but is in several respects a genuine advancement toward a better perception of that reality which we term truth. Of course it is only too obvious that much current theorizing is hasty, mistaken and pernicious. But of what age could not the same assertion be made? Even the rigidly legalized conformism of the middle ages produced a crop of blunders and dangerous tendencies which kept inquisitorial commissions working over time. And concerning our era one may even admit that the thinking which has counted most in popular *literature* has been bad thinking. That is, however, eminently natural. Newman once distinguished between difficulties and doubts. Most men—and the popular is that which represents most men—prefer the doubt simply because they shirk wrestling with the difficulty. This last is inexorably woven into the nature of all things—science, religion, social order, mere individual existence. Scepticism is always sloth. Faith is not so much attainment, achievement, as work. The value of a philosophy lies simply in the comprehensiveness and tirelessness of its effort to solve human difficulties by credence in a solution.

It follows that, since the major among these difficulties have existed since the first man reckoned time, progress toward a solution ought to become steadily more noticeable with each generation. Essentially this is the view of Saint Thomas and the normal Catholic opinion. We say "ought" because we know that history teaches otherwise. In the first place, periods of brilliant and concentrated effort give way to eras of desolate shirking. Thus the brilliant German Jesuit, Father Bernard Jansen, bids us remember that if we would understand why Kant broke so resolutely with Scholastic tradition we must see how arid (I should say how lazy) Scholasticism had become in the eighteenth century. The race seems to resemble the individual in having periods of sleep and periods of wakeful activity. Second, new difficulties present themselves at critical times, exacting of the thinker a fresh desire for comprehensiveness. They may be sidestepped in two ways: (a) the philosopher who already has a "system" may refuse to recognize the new difficulty (e.g., the theologian may ignore science, the Newtonian cosmologist may view Einstein with horror); (b) the lure of the difficulty may encourage individuals to break with vast and laboriously constructed systems, in order to erect some fairly easy and "original" solution of their own. Finally, the identification of philosophic systems with socially stratified groups may spur rival groups into basing revolutionary action on a dissident *Weltanschauung* (e.g., Karl Marx adopts materialism, because the bourgeoisie professes idealism, or Frenchmen repudiate Kant and Hegel on nationalistic grounds).

Now, in my humble opinion, we happen to be living at a time marked by a great eagerness for philosophic synthesis and work. The great accomplishment of the generations which preceded us was historical and scientific investigation. Today we have more information about what the ancients and the mediaeval doctors really wrote and thought than would have seemed possible fifty years ago. We are also in possession of scientific knowledge, which however limited makes even the great nature students of the late nineteenth century look very amateurish in retrospect. As a result, despite the myriad social and economic difficulties under which we live, the prospect of a new philosophic comprehensiveness, to be attained if heroic effort is expended, deeply stirs men everywhere. It is no coincidence that Platonism, Aristotelianism and Thomism are being passionately revived; that Hegel's quest for universality is being thoroughly reviewed; that Blondel is hard at work at a synthesis, or that Bergson has emerged from the seclusion to which illness drove him with a remarkable new book; and that in Germany such a thinker as Martin Heidegger has the same kind of audience as once listened to Schelling.

In what follows I shall attempt to describe briefly a few new books in which consciousness of philosophic tradition is being expressed. These books are purposely selected from among those written by non-Catholic authors, because our hope for the future necessarily depends upon what is occurring in groups outside the Church. If advancement is being made there, our own outlook automatically becomes more optimistic. Generally speaking, one may say that their common quality is a negation of materialism, and consciousness of idealistic values. However far they may now and then be from Christian or Catholic truth, their insistence upon a spiritual solution of human difficulties, both of reasoning and of action, makes them friends and even allies.

A good and relatively popular introduction to a contemporary spiritualism is William H. Crawshaw's "The Indispensable Soul" (The Macmillan Company). This is a statement rather than an analysis, but the author—who is a well-known college educator—writes with a warmth of conviction which obviously rests on a lifetime of thought. He makes an important point: "Our fathers and our grandfathers used to be concerned about saving their souls. They did not think to question the soul's existence. What troubles the modern man is the doubt whether he has any soul to save. That doubt paralyzes him for high action. Does it not in truth paralyze him

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for all action above the level of the brutes?" These important matters are then discussed in lucid chapters on the limitations of science, the realities of vitalism and spiritual activity, and the abiding importance of religion. The book closes with an admirable and provoking exposition of the "wider horizons" open to a mankind aware of the spirit and its possible use. Dean Crawshaw has, no doubt, addressed his book to young people, especially to students. One hopes that many of them will actually read it. Meanwhile those who wish to see an unusually brilliant, poetic treatise on the same ideas may turn to Franz Werfel's "Können wir ohne Gottesglauben Leben," just published in German and doubtless soon to be issued in English.

The "action" proper to man is being approached by thinkers more and more resolutely from the point of view of values. These form the subject of Nicolai Hartmann's three-volume "Ethics" (The Macmillan Company), which Dr. Stanton Coit has translated into English so admirably that one almost never realizes that the German original exists. Dr. Hartmann, certainly one of Germany's most important living philosophers, wrote this treatise in no mood of academic abstraction. It was, indeed, largely suggested by reflection at the front during the recent war, and the writing has a most impressive virility and distinction. The author is preëminently a metaphysician, so that "values" are not treated by him as if they existed *in vacuo*. Hartmann's divergence from Catholic philosophy focuses at this point: moral and ontological values constitute for him an objective, ideal realm worthy of reverence and worship, but not certainly known as personalistic. Making due allowance for this hiatus, one will find the work enlightening, instructive and salutary.

The scope of ethics is seen as being determined by two questions, which are organically complimentary. "I can gage what I ought to do only when I 'see' what in general is valuable in life," the author writes. "And I 'see' what is valuable only when I experience this 'seeing' itself as a valuable attitude, as a task, an inner activity demanding expression." He himself seeks first to make clear the structure of the ethical phenomenon, by invoking the spirit of Plato to define properly values, which are not "laws of existence," nor categories, but only verities set forth by the "primary consciousness of good and evil." There follows an examination of false theories of ethics (Hartmann negates both eudaemonism and utilitarianism), and a treatise on the structure of the "ought." Now we arrive at Volume II, which is from our point of view the more valuable. This offers an analysis of moral values based upon Aristotle's "Nichomachean Ethics," of which Hartmann makes use so discriminatingly and helpfully that no one interested in the subject can forego reading what he has to say. Since this is only a journalistic summary and advertisement, it is impossible to discuss Hartmann's findings in detail. But I feel that despite major and minor disagreements this treatise is one for the existence of which the student or teacher of ethics will often be deeply grateful.

Hartmann has, of course, been deeply influenced by the phenomenological method, the great protagonist of which is Edmund Husserl. There is no doubting that of all the recent developments in philosophy this is one of the most widely discussed. Husserl's "Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology" is now available in an English translation by Professor W. R. Boyce Gibson (The Macmillan Company). Doubtless this is one of the most difficult books ever written, being as it is an attempt to found a science of essences. The method is based upon a far-reaching critique of empiricism. "For 'experience' we substitute," says the author, "the more general 'intuition,' and therefore decline to indentify science in general and science of experience. Moreover, it is easy to see that he who supports this identification and contests the validity of pure eidectic thinking is led into a scepticism which, as genuine, cancels itself through its own absurdity. It is sufficient to question empiricists concerning the source of the validity of their general thesis (e.g., that 'all valid thought has its ground in experience as the sole object-giving intuition') to get them involved in demonstrable absurdities. Direct experience gives only singular elements and no generalities, and is thus insufficient. It can make no appeal to the intuition of essences, since it denies such intuition; it must clearly rely on induction, and so generally on the system of mediate modes of inference through which the science of experience wins its general propositions." The importance of Husserl's critique is therefore unquestionable, even though the outlook and procedure of pure phenomenology may leave the reader unconvinced. At any rate, here is the book and those who wish to wrestle with it will find their time well occupied.

We are here very close to Bishop Berkeley, that often totally misunderstood "practical philosopher," to whom J. M. Hone and M. M. Rossi have devoted a very fine book ("Bishop Berkeley: His Life, Writings and Philosophy." The Macmillan Company). Though Berkeley was not a philosopher in the true sense, he did entertain adumbrations of those aspects of the theory of knowledge which have particularly concerned recent thinkers. Messrs. Hone and Rossi, it is true, hold that it has been a common error to "take Berkeley for an idealist when he was purely a subjectivist." Their analysis, both of the man and his doctrine, is unusually keen, competent and instructive.

Of far greater import than Berkeley is the persistent Platonic tradition in English thinking. To this Professor John H. Muirhead, editor of the "Library of Philosophy," has devoted a book of great historical value. "The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy" (The Macmillan Company) endeavors to show that, though empiricism came to be thought the characteristic form of British philosophy, there has existed a continuous "Platonic tradition" of native quality however much influenced in its later developments by foreign speculation. One section deals with the Cambridge Platonists, and with Cudworth, Norris and Collier in particular. Another discusses Hegelianism in England, with special emphasis on Bradley whose work, lucidly and sympathetically analyzed, is termed epoch-making. The third section is a critical study of idealism in America, with especial attention to Pierce and Royce. It is an exceptionally level-headed, well-organized book by an engaging man.

Professor Muirhead's other recent book, "Coleridge as Philosopher," might be termed an addendum to his history of the Platonic tradition (The Macmillan Company). Of Coleridge we are asked to believe: "With a courage and persistency for which he has received too little credit . . . almost alone and in spite of the obstructions of his temperamental failings, he pursued the ideal of such a comprehensive and organized system of thought as might at last in his own country merit the name of philosophy." With the help of hitherto unutilized material, a description of Coleridge's system is then offered which is certainly often interesting, and which does certainly strengthen one's conviction that theistic idealism did not simply go to sleep during the English romantic age.

Those who read through one or the other of these books—which are just a few among many—will, I think, get some picture of a modern effort which deserves respect. It may be that finality is wanting, as it has been in the past. When mankind slakes to the full its quest for truth, heaven and earth will have passed.

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STAGE AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

A Thousand Summers

MERRILL ROGERS, the author of Jane Cowl's latest vehicle, has taken his title from a line of Swinburne—but neither the source of his title nor the star who interprets his work, nor the most capable assistance of those two splendid actors, Franchot Tone and Osgood Perkins, can lift his play above and beyond a mediocre restatement of the Young Woodley-Marchbanks-Fata Morgana material. "A Thousand Summers" is just another play of the very young man falling in love with a much older though still beautiful woman, who in spite of herself reciprocates his love. The play also carries the unhealthy implication that it is quite a fine thing for a young man to receive his initiation into matters of sex from someone who can surround it with the glamor of love and thus save him from a cruder experience.

The story of the play will make my point clear. Neil Barton (Franchot Tone) is traveling in England with his aunt and uncle, the Thompsons, who have brought him up from early childhood. He is twenty-one and on his way to Paris, where he expects to study art for a year before returning to a possible business career. At a small inn in the lake regions he meets Sheila Pennington (Jane Cowl), a woman of thirty-six whose husband was killed in the war, since which time she has been the mistress of many men, but without love in her heart. After the fashion of plays of this sort, Sheila is pictured as a woman of dignity, grace, humor and wisely tempered charity. Her many and loveless experiences have brought nothing of hardness or cynicism into her make-up. Such characters abound in plays but seem to be exceedingly rare in the world of realities. At all events, she has a very happy and innocent time rowing about the lakes with young Barton, and only discovers after a week of this idyllic companionship that he is in love with her and she with him. Thereupon she talks it all over with the boy's aunt and uncle and promises them, rather against her "better" judgment, that she will do nothing to harm his innocence. On the eve of Barton's departure, she admits her love for him, but remembering her promise, dismisses him with a kiss. Thereupon, in a mood of some bewilderment, Barton goes out with a waitress at the inn. His revulsion of feeling at this "experience" is used in the last act to indicate that Sheila would have done better to make no promises and thus to have changed his experience from one of sex to one of "love."

Obviously, a play of this sort merits very little attention on its own account. It is, however, rather typical of an irrational mood of the day which creeps into a great many of our plays—into most of them, in fact—and to that extent serves to illustrate the importance of a play's theme, as distinct from its plot. The action of "A Thousand Summers" is all very restrained. The atmosphere is redolent of the English countryside. It is the theme (that is, the question put up to the woman as the main character and her answer to that question) which gives the entire play the philosophy that "romance" is a complete substitute for ethics and straight thinking. It never enters Sheila's fair head that she might have used her influence over Neil Barton, and her accumulated experience of the ways of man, to lead him slowly toward a clear sense of values and of proportion. Apparently she can think of only one way to make a man out of a boy. It is in this respect that John Van Druten, in "Young Woodley," accomplished far more than his most severe critics are willing to admit. Laura Simmons also admitted her love for Woodley, but in showing him that her own duty and his led them toward separate paths, she managed to use the strength of her love to make him into a man overnight. Van Druten understood that romance may consist much more in a great denial than in an impulsive yielding. To take a very mundane example, one of the most popular if also trashy, romances ever written, "The Prisoner of Zenda," closed on the theme that "love is not all." At quite another literary pole, we have the romantic theme of the troubadours, culminating for all ages in Dante and Beatrice. It is only in the sloppy trend of modern thinking that romance must always mean the indulgence of desire. Mr. Rogers's play has only this significance, that it slops around in the pseudo-romance of a thoroughly unromantic school.

The Immortal Vagabond

SPEAKING of romance, one can find it in sentimental abundance, if without any great distinction, in one of the latest German films at the Little Carnegie Playhouse. I have said before, and wish to repeat, that one can find more moments of true artistic excitement in the series of German films which this theatre is showing (with explanatory English dialogue titles) than in four-fifths of the current Hollywood product. The German realism is highly selective and always brought to a high pitch of interest through imaginative photography. The German actors are singularly thorough in their characterizations and remarkably free from the self-conscious posings of many of our California idols. The weakest part of the German films I have seen so far has been the matter of plot.

"The Immortal Vagabond," for example, has a serious plot weakness, a moment of utter improbability which almost destroys the illusion of its clear and tender romance and the delightful effect of its atmosphere both in the Tyrolese Alps and in Vienna. It tells the story of Hans Ritter, a country school teacher, who finally has an opera accepted and produced in Vienna. He returns to his native village only to find that his Anna, the daughter of the village postmaster, has married a prosperous cattleman. Her father had withheld from her all of Ritter's letters. Ritter, knowing nothing of this, is in despair and turns tramp, giving up all of his promising career. Another tramp steals his overcoat containing some of his papers, and is later found drowned. Ritter is content to let the news go forth that he is dead, and even serves to identify the corpse. This, of course, is the weak point in the plot, since Ritter, himself a tramp without a name, would hardly be the only one requested to identify the body of the famous young composer, known to leading Viennese musical circles. However, after five years, his native town erects a monument to his memory. Ritter is drawn to the unveiling ceremony through bitter curiosity. Anna recognizes him in the crowd. She is now a widow. She seeks him out and begs him to come back to her. But he points to the monument—Ritter is dead. Then she tells him that she will go out with him on his long and nameless journey. The lovers are united on the vagabond road. This simple story is delightfully told from both the picturesque and musical angles. It is a modest enough romance, and somewhat over-sentimentalized, but full of the glamor of its scenes and characters. Gustav Froelich is excellent as Ritter, except for a few mannerisms borrowed from Emil Jannings. Liane Haid as Anna has both simplicity and grace.

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COMMUNICATIONS

THE NEW IRISH RÉGIME

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: A word regarding Miceal O'Kiersey's exceptions to Mr. Colum's masterly and judicial presentation of the present Irish position. "Annuities" is not a question of justice or equity. Britain owes thrice the amount of Ireland on the evidence of her own commission; it was only a question of whether in view of larger interests it was yet expedient for the Free State to insist upon her right. Preferential rates could be used against her commerce and incipient industries; Denmark and Holland could be given the edge in their present close competition; and the frictions arising would not quicken the entrance of the "Ulsterites" and the conversion of the Free State into Ireland, the mediate but necessary goal of all policies. To this indispensable union, De Valera's policy of retention of annuities by unilateral action was a block; the later and wiser announcement of reference to impartial arbiters fortunately removes it.

Your critic ignores De Valera's more disturbing oath-killing brain-storm. The oath is the formal expression of Ireland's bond to Britain, and must remain while the bond remains. The bond's the thing; and the breaking of it is again but a question of expediency. Ireland, being a national entity, has the right to break that bond, and the duty to break it when this becomes consonant with her interests. But the Free State is not Ireland; and not until it is, will her severance from Britain be possible or politic. Fussing now about the oath, a mere sign, will but give further life to the Orange die-hards and tie the bond tighter on the substance. Mr. Cosgrave was wiser in securing such peace and prosperity in the Free State as would induce the less prospering "Ulster" to unite with it. Only when this happens can talk of complete independence have validity.

Protesting the "secret societies" brand for the Communist murder gangs and allied groups proscribed by the Cosgrave government, was not ingenuous. These had been already condemned by the Irish episcopate as bonded under oath to overthrow the government by force, some including assassination. What are "secret societies" anyhow? Their chief organ, *An Poblacht,* was professedly Communist and Soviet; and lifting the ban on it, and on the "republican army" it champions, holds perilous portent for the new régime. A government, with an army independent of it, is an ominous anomaly.

It is to Mr. Cosgrave's credit that he could harness men of means and influence, even though Masons, to his support against the inane rebellion and harassments of fanatics and soreheads. These he utilized in such far-seeing schemes for industrial development as the Shannon electric plant, but bitter Masonic opposition did not deflect him from restoring Gaelic to all Irish education and fostering its Catholic content, thus establishing two saving fundamentals, the one to keep the Irish in Ireland, and the other to keep them Irish. As to Masonry, Miceal O'Kiersey had better let the bishops of Ireland attend to it there, and himself center his energies upon it here at home, where its members dominate courts, Cabinet and Congress.

Mr. Rice bars all criticism of so "noble" a personality. Well, even the noble err, and may need to be set right. The "Easter week" test certainly proved nobleness, but not necessarily statesmanship. In several friendly contacts Mr. De Valera impressed this observer as a forceful and resourceful but obstinate egocentric of narrow outlook, prone to deem subservience, loyalty and disagreement enmity, and gifted with the dangerous logic that can reason rancor into rectitude and prove the wildest theorizing wisdom. It was this that made him a splitter of Irish unity in the United States, and again, and bloodily, in Ireland. Age may bring reviviscence of his nobleness, but unless history reverses its teaching, Mr. Colum's appraisal will prove prophecy.

Ireland takes the situation more calmly than your critics. They should take comfort from the Irish bishops' commendations of the peace and order and balance that marked the elections, resulting in no violent upset of parties nor in personal bitterness, and from Bishop Cohalan's typical pronouncement:

"Whatever government is in power, whether of our own party or of another, is the government not of one party but of the country, and the hearty wish and prayer of everyone should be that God may bless that government and that it be successful in governing Ireland."

It is thus best service may be rendered by Miceal O'Kiersey, as also by

MICEAL MCDIARMUID.

Dublin, Ireland.

TO the Editor: What tempts me to make reply to the communications which my article drew to your columns is the letter of Mr. Charles O. Rice. There is something appealing in that letter. It is evidently by an honest and bewildered man. Mr. Rice, I take it, started with a dislike, reasonable or unreasonable, of the Treaty of 1921, and he has seen nothing or heard nothing since except what belittled the work of the men who, out of that treaty, created the Irish Free State. He is bewildered because now and again there comes to him a suggestion that these men have had the support of the majority of the Irish people for the past ten years, and that after having been so long in office they still have the support of a minority that almost amounts to a majority. He thinks my article "devilishly clever," because he assumes that I wrote it to pull wool over the eyes of your readers and not because I had any convictions on the subject. To him I am "a propagandist"—that is, someone who is engaged in cooking up a case—and it does not occur to him that I am sincere when I say that Mr. Cosgrave and his colleagues saved Ireland from loss and humiliation and made her respected by the only people whose respect is worth having, the statesmen and men of affairs in Europe and America. He speaks of somebody whom I take to be President De Valera as "a noble statesman and a friend of the people of Ireland," and it does not dawn upon him that to a great many discerning Irish people the words could apply to Mr. Cosgrave.

It all, I think, comes from Mr. Rice's deficient information. He speaks of my article as "the best presentation of the Free State side of the question that I have ever seen or heard," thereby showing, first of all, that he has not seen or heard any other presentation, and, secondly, that he does not know that "the Free State side" is also the side President De Valera is on. The President and his colleagues, are "Free Staters"; they have appealed to the electors to let them take the government in accordance with the constitution formed by the founders of the Free State and that constitution binds them. Mr. Rice's notion that only "propagandists" are on the Free State side is quite out of date. And his deficient information is shown again when he speaks of "Colum's attempt to rationalize away the motives of Sinn Fein and Fianna Fail." I take it that, to the writer's mind, Sinn Fein and Fianna Fail have like policies. But this is very wide of the mark. The spokeswoman for Sinn Fein, Miss MacSwiney, has been telling the Irish public with an eloquence that no member of the opposition wants to emulate that President De Valera is insincere, and that he is trifling with and fooling the Irish people. Mr. Rice, I feel certain, is an honest

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man, and a man who takes a deep interest in Ireland, and if his information corresponds so little with actual conditions, someone is to blame for it. Can it be that there are "propagandists" on the other side, whose "devilishly clever" statements have obscured the issues for him?

And now I turn to Mr. O'Kiersey's letter. Mr. O'Kiersey is a propagandist, that is, he is in the business of getting publicity for certain policies and certain views. I hasten to add that I am sure that his convictions go with his business. He begins by saying that I had the good grace "to refrain from any pretence at being concerned about the freedom of Ireland." I am going to be complacent now and remark that I have done as much for the freedom of Ireland and have as much will and capability of doing something for it as Mr. O'Kiersey has. I believe, however, that the great enemy to an enlargement of Irish freedom is insincerity, and I believe with Miss MacSwiney that the present Irish government are acting insincerely, and that Mr. O'Kiersey fails in sincerity when he does not acknowledge that this is so. He flouts my statement that there are secret societies behind the political front in Ireland, and remarks airily that the publication of the names of these societies by me would be of far-reaching interest. Why does not Mr. O'Kiersey make this remark to the bishops of Ireland? Last autumn they appealed to young men to leave secret societies and begged those who intended to join them to reconsider their decision. No, Mr. O'Kiersey, it was not the Freemason Brotherhood that was in the mind of the bishops as they thought upon the young men in mountain villages. "The Freemason Brotherhood," he remarks, with the slickness of the society journalist who wants to know why Lord L—— paused on the landing when he saw the parlor-maid coming out of the third bedroom, "was popularly believed to be the sinister influence behind the last administration of the twenty-six counties, known as the Free State."

I remember very well when Mr. De Valera escaped from an English prison (through the machination of Michael Collins, as we know now) how many people there were who could tell me that "it was popularly supposed" that Mr. De Valera, who had escaped execution and could slip so easily out of prisons and get across to America without any molestation, had some obscure connections with a certain devilishly clever government. Let Mr. O'Kiersey take such a "popular belief" into account the next time he hears of the "popular belief" that he has mentioned. The trouble with certain people in Irish politics is that they are ready to accept "popular beliefs" instead of looking for facts or thinking out an issue. There were people ready to believe that Mr. De Valera had some dark connections with a certain government, just as there were people ready to tell us how much money Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins got for their signatures to the treaty, and why Mr. Cosgrave had to do the bidding of the Freemason Brotherhood. And why are the Irish people ready to believe such things about their leaders? The answer is as simple as it is humiliating—Arthur Griffith gives it in his pamphlet, "The Slave Mind in Ireland." The Irish people bear the marks of a long oppression, and one of these marks is distrust of the member of their group who takes command and readiness to destroy him. Parnell was destroyed by this slave mind, so was Arthur Griffith; it pulled the trigger on Michael Collins (for the war against the treaty was not run on the slogan, "Up the Republic," but on, "Who the hell is Mick Collins?"). And it is the slave mind—but how much the more slavish for being backstairs!—that tries to sap a leader with, "It is popularly supposed."

I believe that the line taken by President De Valera and his colleagues with regard to the oath is quite insincere. Either they want to get out of the British Commonwealth of Nations or they want to stay in. If they want to get out, why do they have to bother about an oath? And if they want to stay in, why don't they say so? A supporter of theirs, Mr. Frank MacDermott, put this up to them on the first reading of the bill: "The government state that they have no mandate to go out of the commonwealth. But that implies that we are members of the British Commonwealth, or it would not be necessary to obtain a mandate to leave it. It implies that the Irish people have accepted the commonwealth, and, if that is the official view of the Fianna Fail party, it would be very interesting to have it stated plainly. . . . We are an ancient race, with noble and moving traditions, with tragic and glorious memories. Do not let us behave like guttersnipes. Politically we are a young nation. Let us form the habit of thinking rather of our opportunities than of our rights." These are statements that reveal how hollow is the gesture that the successors of Mr. Cosgrave and his colleagues think it worth while to indulge in.

PADRAIC COLUM.

SAD PLIGHT OF ALASKA'S BISHOP

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: It is the practice of the Marquette League for Catholic Indian Missions, with offices at 105 East 22nd Street, New York City, to make a special appeal twice each year for some needy Indian mission in this country or Alaska.

Our appeal at this time is for the venerable Bishop of Alaska, Most Reverend Joseph R. Crimont, S.J., D.D. He pleads:

"The Alaskan missions are on the verge of closing! Depression has paralyzed our friends! We have no security. The banks refuse to forward more. Substantial assistance is imperative to save the very existence of our missions. Will no one realize our situation? Will no one come to our aid?

"We are not asking our friends to risk life and limb in this, one of the hardest of the missionary fields. We are merely praying you to make it possible for those who are here to remain. We are asking you to share with them your worldly goods here, and their eternal reward hereafter.

"Since the Alaskan missions were born and since I left the arms of my mother, we have never been in a fix approaching the present one. Surely God will listen to this last desperate appeal of a bishop for the souls confided to his keeping!

"The funds formerly set apart for the Alaskan missions by the Jesuit province of Oregon are now exhausted. The situation as you see is desperate. The Alaskan missions with no means of income are left to the mercy of charity or to inevitable abandonment. We are craving your mercy."

Bishop Crimont has spent over thirty-five years in Alaska as a simple missionary, as prefect-apostolic and now as vicar-apostolic and bishop of one of the largest ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the world territorially. His vicariate covers over 600,000 square miles. Our Holy Father, Pius XI, has pronounced Alaska the hardest mission field in the whole world.

In his letter, Bishop Crimont speaks of this as the last desperate appeal of a bishop for the souls confided to his keeping. While he is still vigorous and enjoying good health, he is now seventy-five years of age. This in all probability is his last public appeal for assistance for his very poor Alaskan missions.

Surely the friends of our Indian and Alaskan missions will not turn a deaf ear to this very pathetic and urgent appeal of Alaska's saintly and heroic Bishop.

RT. REV. WILLIAM J. FLYNN,
Secretary General, Marquette League.

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A PROGRAM FOR CATHOLIC ACTION

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: In your Communications column for May 11 a correspondent suggests nine planks in "A Program for Catholic Action" to remedy the present distressed condition of industry. While lauding his leadership in attempting to stir up action on this all-important problem among our strangely inactive Catholic laity, I wish to point out what I believe are some errors in his solution. Your correspondent, Mr. Neale, does not state clearly just what he believes to be the real causes of the depression, but an analysis of his solution shows that he apparently believes that part of the blame rests on overproduction and the lack of "real competition." Let Mr. Neale refer to any unbiased economist, who will tell him that there is no overproduction, and there can be none until all the wants of all men are completely satisfied. Is there an overproduction of wheat while men are starving? Is there an overproduction of dwellings while families live in the vilest of tenements in our large cities?

The term "real competition" is too vague to be properly understood, but it may be stated that any competition in a stable industry results in a duplication of effort and tremendous waste, all of which must eventually be borne by the community. In order to provide this "real competition" Mr. Neale would split present corporations into the units existing before mergers made within the last twenty years. Certainly this would result in a loss of efficiency, since up to a certain point the efficiency of a company increases with its size, and this point was not reached twenty years ago, or the present large trusts would not have been able to displace their smaller competitors as they have done.

The program in general is based on governmental regulation of private business, which is an impossibility. Big business and government are mutually corruptive and must remain so, as long as the government has the power to dispense privilege. Other conditions being equal, an honest business man cannot compete with one who is corrupting the government for personal gain, and similarly an honest office-holder cannot long defend his position against a candidate allied with dishonest business.

This letter is admittedly critical, not constructive. Space would not permit the development and defense of a genuine program, had I the temerity to attempt it. However, while pointing out what I consider wrong in the program already submitted, I wish to join in the appeal for a real Catholic program. I plead for a program which recognizes that the misery which so large a part of our nation is now suffering is not due to overproduction, spots on the sun, extravagance, glut, lack of confidence, the wrath of God or any other fanciful weaknesses of the economic structure which are conjured up by prejudiced publicists to conceal the real causes.

F. P. H.

OUR FRANKENSTEIN

Dayton, Ohio.

TO the Editor: Apropos of your editorial of April 20, "Ballyhoo's Greatest," I believe it would be quite in order to make bold to bring out the thought of your readers on the question involved.

That the prosperity, with all of its implications, of the automotive industry through the continued unrestricted use of its product regardless of the fitness of the user (in many more senses of the word than one) is too great a price to pay for our much-vaunted American standard of living, is my firm belief.

CLARENCE F. BURKHARDT.

BOOKS

Mr. Filene's Ideas

Successful Living in This Machine Age, by Edward A. Filene, in collaboration with Charles W. Wood; with an Introduction by Glenn Frank. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

AT CERTAIN points this striking book will set its reader to grinding his teeth; for the rest it will set him to thinking. But it first will oblige him to regret several needless misfortunes which Mr. Filene has allowed to befall it. One is the very title, since this machine age at present is permitting few people to live successfully, and many people it is not permitting to live at all. By this touch of irony in his title he may have driven from him many a reader whom his teachings would have added to that body of enlightened opinion without which the best business leadership in the world is helpless.

Mr. Filene also hurts only himself when he thinks to whiff aside critics of the machine age, as wanting a mere return to ox-cart days. Those impatient with the present constitution of things are not looking back, but rather too far ahead. From their point of view, modern business itself is at the ox-cart stage, and they take its present condition as rather bearing them out in that contention.

Mr. Filene is frank to admit as much, but otherwise turns the depression to account as furnishing the very proof he needs for his own contention. This is that business in general is still in the grip of a backward majority whom he calls the "traditionally minded." His charge that these hold up the works may be true enough; but if his ideal world of universal high wages, low prices and evenly distributed wealth is to be realized, these benighted business men are the first to be brought into line; to win these over, patience and leading are better than the lash of scorn.

To some of his readers he also will appear to force his argument, in the chapters in which he details a Fordized mass production as transforming whatever is amiss in such fields as art, sociology, politics and religion. It may be true that mass production is going to take over the world and better all life, but this way of stating the case recalls that organ-blower who, at the end of one of George Frederick Handel's recitals in London, stepped from behind the instrument and exclaimed to that master, "Didn't we give a wonderful concert!" Mr. Filene does not lose sight of the man at the keyboard, but, as a practical man, the burden of his thought is on tuning up the instrumentalities of life for that better performance which he is sure is to come from somewhere.

This disposes of about all criticism against his book. The rest is praise. The country is heavily in debt to Mr. Filene for a lifetime of good works in promotion of its welfare, and for repeatedly enriching its knowledge from his store of experience and observation. This time he has a far more important message to deliver. In fact his book is important not alone in itself but as a phenomenon of the times. At last the country, and perhaps the world, has discovered that if it is to get out of these wallows, it must think itself out. Here is a vigorous effort in that direction.

In essence Mr. Filene's thesis is that a rising mass production, geared to a rising mass consumption by means of low prices, high wages, an ever-rising standard of living, and the leisure to enjoy it, is the brightest promise so far offered humanity of escape from poverty into a rounded life. Although mass production appears to many as already somewhat unmanageable,

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Mr. Filene is confident that the genius able to invent the machine will be able to tame it into that slave which will ultimately release humanity to its real pursuits. How, with every variety of proof and persuasion he pushes this promise of saving grace into every activity of modern life, his readers had better find out for themselves. This review is for the purpose of inviting them to a pleasure and a profit, for on page after page the book is both. It even is rich in humor, and is so expertly written that to illustrate any of its points is almost impossible without quoting the entire book.

One of the finest of the many good deeds which Mr. Filene has to his credit is the financial and educational aid he has given to the establishment and the spread of credit unions. In his present book Mr. Filene leads up to this subject in a chapter on "Mass Production and Credit," and as the passage is one of his most penetrating studies of the times, as well as the best example of the character of his book as a whole, it will bear quotation.

"The conservative banker," says Mr. Filene, "simply has not studied mass credit. It has not been any part of his training to study the masses at all. He learned his banking in another age—an age in which it was absolutely necessary, if there was ever to be a machine civilization, that the people generally should consume much less than they were producing, and that the resulting surplus be employed in the financing of more production. . . . People were induced to save, and to put their money into the bank, so that it might draw interest for themselves; and bankers loaned these savings to business men, not with any thought of building a new social order, but because new machine methods promised dividends for the capital invested."

But how about adequate security for these loans of savings? "That was a question which was naturally hard to answer, considering how these loans were being used. They were being used, as we now see, to erect a new civilization; but no one knew this at the time, and it was quite out of the question to offer shares in the new civilization as security for the actual loan of cold, hard, old-civilization cash. So the bankers answered the question by deciding that the proper security is that security which by long experience has proved to be safe."

During the period of transition from an agricultural to a machine civilization, Mr. Filene explains, surplus capital was needed to finance further enterprise, and bankers were eminently sensible in advocating thrift. Then "one of the strangest events of human history happened"—the swift development of large-scale production. "The great business now was to keep the machine going, and it could be kept going only if its products were sold" to the masses. "The masses were willing. There was not the slightest doubt about that. All they lacked was the buying power. . . . They were in the same fix now that the would-be producer was in a generation and two generations before. They needed credit. It was, although the bankers did not know it, the greatest credit crisis of the times."

If the capitalists had understood capitalism, Mr. Filene contends, they could have met this crisis by financing consumption until wages were raised in harmony with the increased productivity of the industrial mechanism. Instead they called on the masses to refrain from buying goods and to invest their savings in still more production, and the moment industry then languished, the bankers advised reduced wages, resulting in further reduced sales.

Finally mass production itself found a way out through an astonishing extension of instalment buying—all quite unsound from the banker's view. The masses were "mortgaging their future." Crude as the instalment system was, Mr. Filene regards it as a success, in extending to the masses the credit which the banks would not supply, and creating a prosperity which the country would not otherwise have had.

The lesson, Mr. Filene laments, was lost on the average financier. For next, instead of extending consumer credit to the masses, a tremendous effort was made to induce them to buy fewer commodities and invest their savings in stocks. The effort succeeded and prosperity vanished. The man with a little money, instead of buying an electric refrigerator, bought refrigerator stock. In not very long, factory orders dropped, so did stocks, and the man with a little money wound up with no stocks, no refrigerator, and no money. "There are times," says Mr. Filene, "when the best way to save money is to spend it . . . and these times demand credit for the masses as surely as the times ever demanded adequate credit for business enterprise."

How well the masses are to be trusted with this credit is proved by the unexpected success of instalment buying. "But an even better illustration is the almost phenomenal rise of the credit unions in America, and their phenomenal stability at the time of the great financial crash when so many great banks succumbed. . . . We have noticed," Mr. Filene drily concludes, "that people could not supply their wants because they were unemployed. We neglected to notice that they were unemployed because they were not supplying their wants. . . . Now we have discovered the consumer. When that discovery gets into the thinking of our financiers, credit for the masses will become a fact. Financiers will then no longer suggest that production be limited to consumption, but will see production wholly in terms of supplying human needs. And they will no longer suggest that wages be lowered; they will withhold credit, rather, from employers . . . who persist in keeping wages dangerously low."

In his ventures on art, politics and religion, Mr. Filene may permit himself some hair-raising escapes from bunk, but after many chapters like the above the reader will be apt to agree with a line in Dr. Glenn Frank's introduction, "that this book comes like a breath of clean and antiseptic air through a stuffy room."

BURTON KLINE.

Sociology

American Society, by Charles F. Thwing. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.25.

Society, by R. M. MacIver. New York: Ray Long and R. Smith, Incorporated. $5.00.

THOUGH these two books are not in themselves complementary in idea and presentation, they have this in common, that both seek for the causes of certain observable tendencies in modern society.

Dr. Thwing is not so much concerned with the legalities of these tendencies as to indicate them and comment upon their defects, and especially to interpret the time period of 1911 to 1931, practically a generation. As a commencement, he seeks to interpret "that fundamental institution known as the family," but his discussion is by no means satisfying, either in the presentation of facts or in the assessment of the results of a modern marriage. None will dispute the contention that control of the wife and children by the male parent does not exist, or assert that much regard is paid to the fact that in the majority of cases all persons within the family are dependent on the earnings of the male parent. Indeed the usual attitude toward the father and any examination of the failure to reproduce the family should awaken some measure of alarm. Figures given by Dr.

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Thwing show that the educated classes are not reproducing themselves. For example, the six classes of Harvard College, 1872-1877, numbering 634 members, had produced only 1,262 surviving children of their marriages, while of the 634 members, by 1902 only 72 percent had married. Figures for the classes of Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Connecticut, for the three decades from 1841 to 1870, show that within that period the children per family sank from 4.5 to 2.4. This, taken in conjunction with the increasing use of the divorce courts, indicates plainly that the American family in the white-collar cross-section of society is in no very healthy state. This in spite of the fact that few countries have laws based on such approximate equality of rights for men and women as has the United States. Such equality has neither produced marital or family peace nor lessened divorce. Perhaps the need lies within the sacramental aspect of marriage. In his encyclical on marriage Leo XIII said: "Nothing can be more opposed to truth than that the sacrament is but an ornamental addition, or a character imparted from without, which may be separated and disjoined from the contract at will."

Some such view as this latter seems to be present in the deeper consciousness of Dr. MacIver, for in his preface he asserts: "Any science which makes the life of man its province must use the tools of the artist as well as those generally regarded as proper to the scientist."

Consequently, in his view, to understand society there must be appreciation of the processes of group life, together with all those conscious attitudes of interdependent relationships which, by their variety and in their subtlety, while sustaining, modify our own as well as every other social system.

The volume in reality advances social science but little. In vain the keywords—society, manners, institutions which these have framed, the division of society into communities and associations—are examined to find some new appreciation of life, its government, its relentless forces. Nor is there anything of vivifying influence in the discussion of the social bond, or in that section dealing with sanctions and coercion applied by custom or by communities.

In part four of this thesis, which deals with social change, the author states that "the problem of social causation is exceedingly complex." This is obvious after studying the life history of any community that is continually changing and increasing its area, its population, and thereby its government and methods of control. Change of habit and all that that process carries with it, leads to transformations and reduplications within society, and ends by plotting a new line of direction along which man and his works will proceed, until some more insistent and complicated conditions compel once more a reorientation of effort. But will these physical or governmental controls and variations raise the standard of thought or lead to more considerate treatment of man by man? It is well to reflect that Roman law and Roman Dutch law have bogged us for centuries in the narrow compass of punishment known as fine or imprisonment or death. We have dropped the penalties of exposure and derision, but still retain the meanest of all punishment, secret slander of an individual character. The question is, do the principles on which law is based fit in with those on which our industrial and economic life are based, especially as many demand an extension of legal coercion rather than reconditioning Christian morality to existing problems of government.

If these two volumes are read to find a system of sociology, all that can be said is that the husk is here, but the moral kernel, based on the love of man for man, is absent.

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NEXT WEEK

WAGES ARE TOO HIGH, by Lyle W. Cooper, an experienced and well-known economist, demonstrates how hopeless is the objective of maintaining high wages. He admits the soundness of the theory that high wages mean an increased purchasing power, more employment and better business all around. However, he points out factors in our existing economic system which make all this impossible. This is a highly technical article, but for the reader who wishes seriously to understand our modern world and to aid in the establishment of better times, the effort of assimilating it will be well worth while. . . . WHY ALIENS SEEK CITIZENSHIP, by Harold Fields, Executive Director of the National League for American Citizenship, is a most interesting analysis of the reasons that impel foreigners in our country to become Americans. The writer illuminates his informative statistics with vivid stories of personalities. . . . THE QUINTESSENCE OF CATHOLICISM, by the Reverend Russell Wilbur, is an explanation of the mystery of suffering, or more especially of the doctrine of the Way of the Cross. Of course any explanation of such mysteries suffers from the limitations of all explanations in a finite world and, perhaps, this might better be called an exposition of certain fundamental aspects of life which will appeal to the intuitive mind. . . . LANDSCAPE BY VAN GOGH, by Alex McGavick, is a glowing appreciation of modern art and of the paradox of the beauty of ugliness. The writer describes in particular an oncoming storm over a parched cornfield in a brilliant passage that rouses the emotions, by way of illustrating his interesting central contention—that modern art is an attempt to capture the elemental aspects of things, rather than their mere pretty forms. The paper should call forth spirited reactions.

Scotland's Best

The Life of Robert Burns, by Franklyn Snyder. New York: The Macmillan Company. $4.00.

PROFESSOR SNYDER'S life of Burns is everything one could expect from an American scholar trained to be objective as well as meticulous. From virtually all points of view his book is the brightest, sanest, most informative treatise yet written about a great figure whom both the sentimentalists and the moralists have victimized. And if one misses any quality akin to luminous sensitiveness, creative warmth, it is only fair to add that the unusual scientific merits of Professor Snyder's work are only very rarely blended with these literary qualities.

The most important "news" that emerges is a fresh impression of the poet's character. Burns is tried on the basis of the available evidence and is shown to have been: (a) a man who drank, often to excess, but who was in no sense a drunkard; (b) a youngster whose relations with women were rough, loose and sometimes disastrous, but who cannot be reckoned among the lecherous; (c) a thoughtful human being who poked fun at austere divines and watered the stern Calvinism of his fathers, but was nevertheless deeply and abidingly religious; (d) no homespun rustic, but—like Keats—interested in thought, art and literature to the extent of studying them all with singular diligence and penetration. How Dr. Snyder goes to work is shown in brief compass by his excellent treatment of the Mary Campbell incident, which he is inclined to see illuminated by remorse rather than by "platonism" in the poet's lyrics.

Much clear light is also focused on the poems, several of which have badly needed the exegesis here supplied. Thus Dr. Snyder's analysis of the Kilmarnock volume is a masterly illustration of how work of this kind ought to be done, and his careful investigation of the bibliography as a whole leaves one wondering why as much is not accomplished in other, even less dependable, domains of literary criticism and biography. In short: the general reader, who likes M. Maurois and his peers, will probably not take to this study of Burns as a duck does to water, but the student will find just what he has been seeking and will give thanks abounding.

PAUL CROWLEY.

South of Ourselves

Latin American Problems, by Thomas F. Lee. New York: Brewer, Warren and Putnam. $2.50.

MR. LEE, engineer and banker of long experience in South America, brings to the interpretation of Latin American problems, the point of view of an economist who is a realist. He is aware that the South American scene has difficulties, situations and backgrounds unlike our own, and he would have all those who deal with the South Americans remember this. He explores the possibilities of economic relations between the two Americas with the wealth of statistical detail that one has come to expect from the modern banker. He is not aware, however, that anything has happened to upset the delicate balance of the capitalistic system under which he has been brought up, and therefore has no notion how out of date his conclusions are.

He concludes that material development is needed in South America and that if she is to develop in this direction, she must proceed very much on the general line of the United States, and he has some wise advice on how this should be done. Nevertheless, despite his acquaintance with the intelligent Latin American mentality, he is still sublimely unconscious that when the Latin American borrows so gaily and irresponsibly as to cause pained surprise in Wall Street circles, he is but showing his

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profound grasp of the realities of capitalism. It is true that in some thirty-six months, he borrowed $1,400,000,000, apparently for no other reason than to allow the politicians to spend some 70 percent of it on the vanities of life. But as Mr. Lee points out, it is equally true that the Wall Street lender was willing to oblige for no other reason than thus a selling profit was made by the passing on of securities. Mr. Lee would like to see this somewhat sloppy system restricted to the severe necessities of productive enterprises. But has not the Latin American a profound grasp of economics, if not of modern capitalism, when he looks upon money as something to spend?

What price money? Are not productive enterprises in the true sense produced by the creative and physical energy of man? Mr. Lee has quite missed the point of the Maya, Aztec and Inca ruins which he so enthusiastically admires. It is possible that the Latin American, having looked at these ruins for a longer time, has digested the two horns of the dilemma they present. Either they were built under a capitalistic era, or they were not. If they were, why their sad ruined state today? And if they were not, the Indians seem to have done pretty well without money. Of course at this stage a third horn to the dilemma appears, but while it shapes itself, why may not the Latin American spend the money foolishly while the North American prepares to impale himself? The dreadful confusion this Latin subtlety introduces into the relations between North and South America escapes Mr. Lee's attention. Is it possible that his devotion to the new school of anthropologists who see in a return to barbarism a return to sanity, has blinded his judgment? The reader will be inclined to think so if he reads the first four chapters of the book.

MARIE R. MADDEN.

A Barren World

The American Mind, by Leon Samson. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $3.00.

MR. SAMSON'S work is a conscientious survey from the Marxian standpoint. It is highly interesting and very well-documented; and it deserves a place in the library of anyone at all engrossed in his part in the American scene.

In his Foreword the author says his book constitutes "a new critical analysis, a socio-analysis of a people, like the psychoanalysis of an individual." He confines himself "to the symptoms of social ill-health." In order to "release the social competence of the American," he traces "the origins of his social incompetence." Yet his conclusion is that "Americans are incompetent in their incompetence" to such an extent that theirs is "an incompetence squared." Mr. Samson sees no hope for betterment.

The American is a social infant, or more exactly a social idiot, who wears seven fixed masks to hide his utter lack of decent adult character, the mask of the good man, the free man, the practical man, the consumer, the broadcaster, the poor man and the bad man. And in all his goings-on in the shifting scene, as politician or business man, he has given the world a civilization which beneath all his cheap antics and brazen pomps remains ideologically barren, intellectually and spiritually bankrupt. That, in brief, is the theme of the book.

What a dismal picture Mr. Samson draws of the average American—a being of strange paradoxes! He lauds law and glories in the constitution but yet is capable of violating every moral code in public life; he stands for prohibition and drinks rot-gut on the sly; he practises his mean-spirited thrift and indulges in sprees of scattering his money to the very gates of

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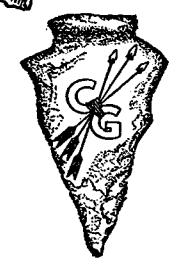

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Jerusalem and before the public eye; he shouts for freedom of speech and never uses the rational modes of decent discourse, saying it instead with "music" or with flowers or mouthing the pomp and violence of his superficial journalism; he extols his morality and stares women out of countenance; he sells buttons or toiletries during the day, a plain fellow, but with night goes to his secret lodge to be transformed into a Grand Chief Mogul. He is a buffoon and a coward making a brave show. He is all front and no back; he wears his national heart on his sleeve. This is the typical American of Mr. Samson, moving aimlessly in a drama that is neither tragedy or comedy. It is farce! "Farce," says Mr. Samson, "turns men into Americans."

Mr. Samson offers not one constructive suggestion; he leaves the outlook hopeless. His volume needs a complement to make it criticism. The critic fails if he does not bring a real charity to his subject. Saint Paul was a true critic of peoples, with his deep sympathy as well as his merciless logic; and he regarded men as the children of light, not as mere human animals. The modern point of view runs counter to this, being merely materialistic. Here lies the difference between vision and the lack of it, that accounts for much of the sublime ignorance of modern criticism. Where there is no vision the people perish, and their critics with them. If the critics grant the people a soul, the people may yet possess it.

The trouble with America seems to be that in seeking the empire of the earth she has well-nigh lost her own soul. This may lie at the bottom of all the distressing phenomena Mr. Samson elucidates. Neither psychoanalysts or socio-analysts can lead her out of this wilderness.

THOMAS F. HEALY.

What Shall I Do?

Vocational Guidance: Principles and Practice. New York: The Century Co. $3.00.

THIS is one of the committee reports of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection. Stately volumes they are in royal octavo. All treat important and timely subjects. All are concerned about the woe and weal of the youth of the land. The book under review is no exception. Its 400 pages contain the most complete statement of the nation's foremost authorities on the principles and practice of vocational guidance. After defining the terminology for the greater part formulated by the National Association for Vocational Guidance, the study of the individual, counseling, scholarships, occupational information and training, and junior employment service pass in review, supported by statistics. The last chapter deals with special problems confronting the vocational counselor. Among these are the young Indians, Negroes, Mexicans and Porto Ricans residing in the states, and rural boys and girls. In the chapter dealing with organizations and institutions, a special section is found on parochial schools. It seems that there is much room for improvement. The National Catholic Education Convention meeting in Cincinnati is taking up the matter.

The interest of the educational world in vocational guidance is best proven by the thirty-six pages of bibilographies containing the more recent and more important publications in this field. Reprints of the questionnaires and forms used in compiling the statistical material found in the reports, constitute the Appendix. The summaries and recommendations following the principal chapters are welcome features. Generally speaking, these recommendations are sound and practical. The volume is one of the most informative books in the matter of vocational guidance.

KILIAN J. HENNRICH.

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Briefer Mention

The Teaching of Jesus: Studies of Its Form and Content, by T. W. Manson. New York: The Macmillan Company. $5.00.

OF ALL recent books on the New Testament which this reviewer has seen, the present volume by a younger Cambridge scholar is the most impressive and distinguished. Though it is necessarily in large part a restatement of views originally formulated by others, the book manifests exceptional powers of logic and synthesis. After reviewing the sources, Dr. Manson proceeds to study the form and content of the Gospels. On the first he has much to say of genuine interest, particularly regarding the Parables. His view of the second is that Our Lord's idea of the Kingdom is an enlargement and deepening of the "Remnant" conception voiced by Isaiah. Of course no Catholic scholar would, one thinks, endorse everything in the volume; but he will almost certainly derive something from it and sympathize with the main trend of its thought. On many topics the author speaks his mind with singular pertinence. Thus, in criticism of those who seek to isolate the Sermon on the Mount as ethical doctrine, he says: "To divorce the moral teaching of Jesus from His teaching as a whole is thus to make it practically useless: it is also to make it theoretically unintelligible. For all the moral precepts of Jesus, in the last resort, flow from a single principle which is not moral but religious; and the understanding of any part of the ethical teaching demands a grasp of the whole religious context in which it has its place."

The Golden Years, by Philip Gibbs. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

THIS new novel by Sir Philip Gibbs may best be considered as an exercise—an experiment in which a writer of 1932 harks back to the age of Victoria not only for his background and color but also for his style and plot. One thus confronts a slight, very slight, variation of "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel." Meredith's running commentary is merely supplanted by Sir Philip's superfluous, though less frequent, chanting of a refrain which now has become a platitude—times were very different then but, underneath, Victoria's subjects were very much like those of George V. There is, of course, the fragrance of lavender, the sweetness of a lace valentine, in "The Golden Years." And a modern reader, while admiring the author's facile cleverness in his invention of a *dea ex machina,* will be highly amused at the spectacle of Lady Isobel, a queen's maid in love with a man "beneath her," brought to marriage with Lord Mannington not through voluntary abandonment of her heart's choice, but through the mandate of Victoria herself. Surely this is Sir Philip's personal innovation upon Victorianism. Your sentimental Victorian would have had the peeress give herself to the romance offered by Grub Street.

Painted Maps, by Elizabeth Shaw. New York: The Dial Press, Incorporated. $3.00.

THIS is a book of pleasant trivialities written without any conspicuous grace of humor or distinction of vision. Its chief merit seems to be the inclusion of chapters on such places as Iceland, Gotland and the Balearics, but a book which deals with travel in eight countries cannot tell you much about any of them. There are other chapters on France, Italy, Russia, etc., filled with the raptures and the little adventures that distinguish the brightly colored folders of the shipping lines.

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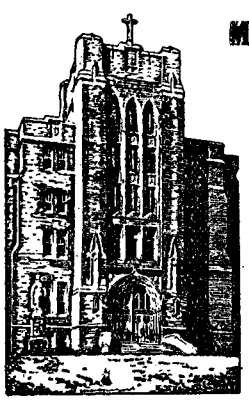
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The Proud House, by Annette Esty. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.00.

THIS is one of those rare books that are a saga of the far lands of the heart, of wanderings down highways trodden for all time and by us all. Pearl Buck wrote such a book in "The Good Earth," and Willa Cather in "My Antonia." They are not typical of any land, but they are typical of the home and the heart. "The Proud House" relates the struggle of Jozefa Kalinski and her husband, Adam, to make a home in America, having left behind them war devastation in Poland. At a broken-down farm in Vermont they and their children work mightily in the onion fields to earn the price of a home. Finally Adam's old father, Michael, purchases for them the "proud house" they had fixed their hopes on. Put in his name, upon his death the house becomes the property of a woman of the town whom Michael had married. Then Adam dies and one woe after another comes upon the family, back again in a hut for a home, back in the fields again to work. But a great flood washes away the village and dramatically gives back to the Kalinskis their proud house—and much more. Back of the crowded pages of this book there is a serenity that is deep and wholesome and everlasting like the earth itself. There is a certainty that knows mountains may be moved by faith and is aware that only lack of faith can wreck life. For the proud house was more than a house—it was an ideal, one may even say, it is everyone's ideal. And that is why there is a universality about this book that sets it apart from the season's offerings.

Music in American Life, by Augustus Delafield Zanzig. New York: The Oxford University Press. $3.50.

A COMMITTEE appointed by the National Recreation Association set out to discover what is being done for music in the United States, and what the opportunities for further development are. Community, school, state, religious and home activities are among those surveyed. The usual pros and cons may be uttered with regard to this survey. It is complete and detailed enough to serve as a useful book of reference, but it is also—from the reference point of view—not complete and detailed enough. As an initial survey it will, however, be of great value to educators and organizers. Of particular interest is the chapter entitled, "School Music and the Community," in which a genuinely impressive catalogue of achievement is placed to the credit of schools and colleges throughout the country.

CONTRIBUTORS

GERHARD HIRSCHFELD is a writer on political and economic topics.

THOMAS WALSH is a new contributor to THE COMMONWEAL.

FRANK C. HANIGHEN contributes articles to current periodicals and makes translations from the French.

J. V. CUNNINGHAM is a California poet.

RT. REV. EDWIN V. O'HARA, Bishop of Great Falls, Mont., is associate chairman of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

BURTON KLINE, who has edited many magazines, is at present interested in patriotic endeavor.

BOYD-CARPENTER, a writer on European politics, is attached to the faculty of the School of Foreign Service of Georgetown University.

PAUL CROWLEY is a translator and writer of literary comment.

MARIE R. MADDEN is the author of "Political Theory and Law in Medieval Spain" and has contributed various biographies to the "Encyclopedia of Social Sciences" and authoritative historical reviews to *Thought* and other periodicals.

THOMAS F. HEALY contributes to literary reviews.

REV. KILIAN J. HENNRICH, O.M.Cap., whose works include "Boy Guidance" and "Boyleader's Primer," is the director general of the Catholic Boys Brigade of the United States.

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